

# THE LIVING AGE.

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## THE BELOVED VAGABOND.

You who were once so careless, I can  
recall you now,  
Your blue-gray visionary eyes, your  
great and open brow,  
With naught to bind your heart-strings,  
and all the world in fee,  
You went where all the roads lead,  
beyond the farthest sea.

Lover of space and skyline, what  
vision seared your eyes?  
What gypsy word was winged to you,  
and bade you gird and rise?  
What thread of smoke sent onward  
your restless, eager feet?  
What vagrant heart was waiting your  
wayward heart to greet?

We, who are kin to the city, across  
the candles praise  
Your tales of camps in twilight, your  
great and gallant ways,  
Your knowledge of the mysteries  
deep-hidden by the wood,  
The pagan trust you placed in man,  
the world you found so good.

Then leave a *patrin* for mine eyes,  
that I may follow too,  
Some day when all the world grows  
dim, and I shall beckon you;  
Across the distant moorland, from  
beacon furze piled high,  
May I, the newest rover, see your fire  
against the sky!

W. G. Tinckom-Fernandez.

The Westminster Gazette.

## MASTERS OF ADVERSITY.

We bear the burden of the years  
Clean-limbed, clear-hearted, open-  
browed;  
Albeit sacramental tears  
Have dimmed our eyes, we know the  
proud  
Content of men who sweep unbowed  
Before the legionary fears;  
In sorrow we have grown to be  
The masters of adversity.

Long ere from immanent silence leapt  
Obedient hands and fashioning will,  
The giant god within us slept,  
And dreamt of seasons to fulfil

The shaping of our souls that still  
Expectant earthward vigil kept;  
Our wisdom grew from secrets drawn  
From that far-off dim-memored dawn.

Wise of the storied ages we,  
Of perils dared and crosses borne,  
Of heroes bound by no decree  
Of laws defiled or faiths outworn,  
Of poets who have held in scorn  
All mean and tyrannous things that  
be;

We prophesy with lips that sped  
The songs of the prophetic dead.

Wise of the brief beloved span  
Of this our glad earth-travelling,  
Of beauty's bloom and ordered plan,  
Of love and love's compassioning,  
Of all the dear delights that spring  
From man's communion with man;  
We cherish every hour that strays  
Adown the cataract of the days.

We see the clear untroubled skies,  
We see the glory of the rose,  
And laugh, nor grieve that clouds will  
rise

And wax with every wind that blows,  
Nor that the blossoming time will  
close,

For beauty seen of humble eyes  
Immortal habitation has  
Though beauty's form may pale and  
pass.

Wise of the great unshapen age,  
To which we move with measured  
tread

All girt with passionate truth to wage  
High battle for the word unsaid,  
The song unsung, the cause unled,  
The freedom that no hope can gauge;  
Strong-armed, sure-footed, iron-willed  
We sift and weave, we break and  
build.

Into one hour we gather all  
The years gone down; the years un-  
wrought,

Upon our ears brave measures fall  
Across uncharted spaces brought,  
Upon our lips the words are caught  
Wherewith the dead the unborn call;  
From love to love, from height to  
height

We press and none may curb our  
might.

John Drinkwater.

## THE CONSTITUTION IN SUSPENSE.

The Constitution of to-day is confessedly "in suspense." But was it ever otherwise? "*En Angleterre la Constitution peut changer sans cesse; ou plutôt elle n'existe pas.*" Such was the famous judgment of Tocqueville pronounced at a time to which we now look back as one of restful immobility. To affirm that the Constitution is in a condition of suspense may seem, therefore, to come perilously near to the iteration of a commonplace—to be a mere verbal variant on a trite aphorism. But if there is nothing new in the assertion, was the truth to which Tocqueville pointed out ever so literally true as it is to-day?

There is no party in England which regards our present constitutional arrangements as anything but provisional. We are plodding along under an ever accumulating load of unfulfilled promises and unrealized Preambles. The constitutional fabric is confessedly incomplete; to the artist a mere torso; to the grammarian a protasis without an apodosis. Again it may be objected that in this situation there is nothing unprecedented, or even unusual; that it differs from previous situations not in kind, but only in degree; that even in the past there have been variations in the rapidity of change. There is undeniably some force in the argument. A Constitution which is not embodied in an Instrument, which draws no distinction between "ordinary" and "fundamental" laws, which confuses the "constituent" with the "legislative" function, which employs the same machinery for turning out a new Constitution for the Australian Commonwealth and for legalizing the marriage of a widower with the sister of his deceased wife, must be subject to perpetual and almost imperceptible

modification. But will anyone contend that the contemporary situation is a mere reproduction of many that have preceded it, or, at most, an exaggeration and accentuation of a familiar phenomenon?

The situation contains, I suggest, at least one element of novelty. Not one Party only, but all Parties are dissatisfied with it. Everyone is living in the anticipation of an immediate change, and many hope that the change may produce something in the nature of a settlement.

What I judge to be the end of your meeting, the great end . . . to wit, Healing and Settling . . . I trust it is in the minds of you all and much more in the mind of God, to cause healing. . . . You have great works upon your hands. You have Ireland to look unto. . . . It is a great business to settle the Government of that Nation upon fit terms, such as will bear that work through.

So spake Cromwell to the first Protectorate Parliament in 1654. "Healing and settling" is at least as much desired by a majority of the nation in 1913 as it was in 1654. There are some who think that the happy consummation can be reached only through much tribulation; that things must be worse before they are better. But no one imagines that they can remain as they are. How are we to account for the prevalence of this sentiment?

The "outs" are content to attribute it to the iniquities of the "ins." But this explanation is too facile; nor will it command universal assent. We must look deeper. Is it to be ascribed to a growing suspicion that Representative Government is not the final stage in the evolution of democracy? There are certainly indications, and not a few, that advanced opinion,

among men of all parties, is consciously or unconsciously, feeling after a more direct form of democracy. A considerable and influential section of the Unionist Party is committed to the device of a *Referendum*. Such an innovation is naturally less acceptable, for the moment, to the party which commands a parliamentary majority. But Radicals may look more favorably upon it when they find themselves in opposition, and in any case the expedient of submitting every specific proposal, on demand, to a poll of the people is hardly one which a convinced democrat can deride. Of similar import is the doctrine of the "mandate" which seems to command an increasing measure of adhesion at any rate among the opponents of the Government of the day. Take, for example, the attitude of the Liberal Party towards Mr. Balfour's Education Bill of 1902. Vehemently they asserted that a majority secured at the "Khaki" election gave the Unionist Party no moral right to deal with the problem of national education. The boot is now on the other foot. With equal vehemence the Unionists maintain that Mr. Asquith has no moral right to pass into law his Home Rule Bill without submitting it in principle, and indeed in detail, to the judgment of the electorate. Speaking at Aberdeen on the 3rd of November, Mr. Balfour said:

I say that when you are dealing with an unwritten constitution like the Constitution of these islands, and when there are absolutely none of the safeguards within these islands which protect the Constitution of every other democratic country in the world, then, and in connection with that vital subject, it is really vitally important . . . to bring the subject before the electors so that their decision may be taken on that issue. . . . After all, you should deal honestly with Democracy, and if you are asking the Democracy

for its opinion you should force upon that Democracy the fact that it has got to decide.

It is only fair to point out that at the same time Mr. Balfour disavowed the doctrine of the "mandate" in its extreme form, and expressly repudiated the idea that "no important measure is ever to be brought forward by a Government unless it has been explicitly argued out in the Address of the Prime Minister, and in the speeches of his colleagues all over the country." Theoretically, Mr. Balfour would doubtless subscribe to the dogma enunciated by Burke in the famous speech to his constituents at Bristol: "Your representative owes you not his industry only, but his judgment, and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." Nevertheless he admits, and indeed insists, that there can be no moral sanction for legislation on matters of first-rate constitutional importance unless the principles of the proposed amendment have been laid before and approved by the electorate. And so long as we refuse to adopt other constitutional safeguards he is plainly and indisputably right. It cannot, however, be denied that the doctrine of the mandate, no less than the device of the *Referendum* is essentially at variance with the root principle of Representative Government, and makes steadily for the substitution of direct democracy.

Even more drastic is the "recall." The modern House of Commons is no longer, as Mr. McKechnie points out in his suggestive study, "made up of free representatives but of tied delegates, fettered by definite promises made before election, to which they are forced to adhere by pressure of the party whips." But what if the pressure be insufficient? What if the member breaks away? "It is obviously



absurd that any section of the sovereign people should be openly flouted by the agent, now the paid agent, appointed to register its commands."<sup>1</sup> To solve this difficulty some logical democrats have propounded the doctrine of "the recall." Why should an enlightened constituency consent to be misrepresented by its agent throughout the term of a quinquennial Parliament? The principal who grants a commission to an agent ought at any moment to be able—of course under regular procedure—to withdraw it. It is needless to point out that the adoption of such a device would undermine the last remnant of independence enjoyed by an elected legislator. I refer to it here merely as an indication of the tendency to substitute direct for indirect democracy. But mischievous as the procedure would be as applied to the Legislature, it would be infinitely worse if extended to the Judicature. Yet there is a section of opinion in the United States of America favorable even to this procedure. Under the [proposed] Recall, writes Mr. Elihu Root, "a judge may be brought to the bar of public judgment immediately upon the rendering of a particular decision which excites public interest, and he will be subject to punishment if that decision is unpopular. Judges will naturally be afraid to render unpopular decisions. . . . Instead of independent and courageous judges we shall have timid and time-serving judges."<sup>2</sup> It is indeed likely. I am not aware that any demand for the application of the principle of the "recall" to the judiciary has actually been formulated in this country; but signs are not lacking that the omnipotent Executive is disposed to encroach upon the sphere

of the Judiciary, as it long since invaded that of the Legislature.

Not only from the political side is the principle of representative democracy exposed to attack. Economic movements exhibit a convergent tendency. The essence of the Syndicalist doctrine may be analyzed as a revolt against the theory and the working of representative institutions. On this point the constitution which, in 1912, was drafted for the reorganization of the South Wales Miners' Federation is eminently suggestive. "Any agent who may be returned a member of Parliament shall be required to relinquish his industrial duties and position" (§ xi). "No member of Parliament shall be eligible to seek for or retain a seat on a local or National Executive Council" (§ xii). "On all proposed labor legislation conferences shall be called to discuss same and instruct our M.P.'s." (§ xiv). "Any member of Parliament, as such under the auspices of the organization, shall at once vacate his seat if a ballot vote of the membership so decides" (§ xv). Here we have the principle both of the "mandate" and of the "recall" asserted in their most extreme form, but it is difficult to deny that the assertion is completely consonant with the doctrine of direct democracy.

On one point, then, Unionists, Democrats, and Syndicalists are agreed: with the working of the constitutional machinery all are profoundly dissatisfied. Does the party actually in office profess to regard the existing arrangements as anything more than provisional? By their own avowal the Constitution under which we are living is an "interim Constitution." The Parliament Act of 1911 may serve as a temporary expedient, it is not even offered as a permanent solution of the constitutional problem. The Preamble to the Act contradicts the suggestion:

<sup>1</sup> W. S. McKechnie, "The New Democracy and the Constitution," pp. 30, 11. John Murray, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> Elihu Root, *Experiments in Government and the Essentials of the Constitution*, pp. 68, 69. Oxford University Press, 1913.

Whereas it is intended to substitute for the House of Lords as it at present exists a Second Chamber constituted on a popular instead of hereditary basis, but such substitution cannot be immediately brought into operation:

And whereas provision will require hereafter to be made by Parliament in a measure effecting such substitution for limiting and defining the powers of the new Second Chamber etc.

The existing arrangement is, then, plainly provisional, intended only to tide over the interval until the Government can find leisure and opportunity to erect a permanent and stable structure. Similarly in regard to the other great legislative project of this Parliament. The Home Rule Bill holds out large expectations of a new Constitution for the United Kingdom, but it does not profess to fulfil them; it provides only an instalment of reconstruction. On what lines the rest of the building is to be constructed we know not. All we know is that there is no intention of leaving things as they are.

Enough has been said to establish my initial proposition that the existing situation is, even for our anomalous Constitution, utterly abnormal. We are well used to a condition of perpetual flux in our constitutional affairs; but we are confronted to-day by a phenomenon which is something more than a particular illustration of a general law. There has been no situation comparable to the present since the middle of the seventeenth century; since the destruction of the Monarchy and the abolition of the House of Lords.

## II.

Is it then surprising that there should be a marked change of tone among political commentators alike at home and abroad?

For more than two hundred years

the English Constitution, despite all its baffling indistinctness of outline, and all its perplexing anomalies of structure, was still the envy and admiration of the world.

There is no civil government that hath been known . . . more divinely and harmoniously tuned, more equally balanced as it were by the hand and scale of justice than is the Commonwealth of England where under a free and untutored monarch, the noblest, worthiest and most prudent men, with full approbation and suffrage of the people have in their power the supreme and final determination of highest affairs.<sup>3</sup>

Such is the fine eulogy of Milton, poet and political philosopher in one. Nor has there been wanting from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth a due succession of fit persons quick to apprehend and well qualified to expound the peculiar genius of the English Constitution.

By all eulogists from Milton to Burke, from Burke to Bagehot, that genius has been held to consist primarily in the exquisite proportion, the "nice equivoise" of its various parts; in the interaction and counteraction of the checks and balances of a "mixed constitution." The eulogy of native publicists may, perhaps, be discounted. Not less remarkable, however, was the admiration which the peculiar features of the English Constitution evoked from foreign observers. Even its shortcomings seem to them to contribute towards its success.

Le Gouvernement d'Angleterre [wrote Montesquieu] est plus sage parce qu'il y a un corps qui l'examine continuellement, et qui s'examine continuellement lui-même: et telles sont ses erreurs, qu'elles ne sont jamais longues, et que par l'esprit d'attention qu'elles donnent à la nation, elles sont souvent utiles.

<sup>3</sup> "Of Reformation in England." Complete works, p. 17.

In strain not dissimilar, another French critic, more than a century later than Montesquieu, insists upon the happy incoherences, the useful incongruities, the protecting contradictions which have such good reasons for existing in institutions, viz. that they exist in the nature of things, and which, while they allow free play to all social forces, never allow any one of those forces room to work out its allotted line, or to shake the foundations and walls of the whole fabric.<sup>4</sup>

I cite these judgments in order to press home a question which seems to me pertinent. Would it be possible to produce testimonials equally flattering from foreign publicists to-day? Is there among progressive peoples the same disposition to offer to Great Britain the only sincere form of flattery, and to imitate her political institutions? Nay, is there the same confident tone among English commentators themselves as that which prevailed down to the end of the Victorian era? Are we so certain that to us alone among the peoples the secret of successful and harmonious government has been revealed? There is something superb in the national arrogance of Burke who compares the English Constitution to an acknowledged masterpiece in art or literature: "We ought to understand it according to our measure; and to venerate where we are not able presently to comprehend." Would any commentator, English or foreign, re-echo to-day the almost religious enthusiasm of Burke?

It happens that within the last few months two distinguished publicists, both of whom have knowledge not merely of books but of affairs, have published their thoughts concerning the working of their respective Constitutions. Neither in President Poincaré's luminous and copious study of

<sup>4</sup> Emile Boutmy, "Studies in Constitutional Law." Eng. trans. p. 7.

French Government,<sup>5</sup> nor in Mr. Elihu Root's slight but suggestive lectures on the essentials of the American Constitution, do I find so much as a single envious reference to English institutions, or any expressed preference for our constitutional arrangements as compared with their own. On the contrary, both writers lay considerable emphasis upon those features of the French and American Constitutions which present the most marked contrast to that of Great Britain. M. Poincaré, for example, quotes with high approval Montesquieu's doctrine of the "Separation of Powers," and himself adds: "To separate clearly the essential manifestations of sovereignty and to trace the precise limits of the authority delegated to the representatives of the nation: here is one of the first necessities of constitutional organization." The Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789 proclaimed the same principle with emphasis: "Every society in which the guarantee of rights is not assured, nor the separation of powers determined, has no constitution." Not less emphatic was the French Constitution of 1848: "the separation of powers is the first condition of free government." The reflections of Mr. Elihu Root are not dissimilar.

The precise allotment of power and lines of distinction are not so important [he writes] as it is that there shall be distribution and that each officer shall be limited in accordance with that distribution, for without such limitations there can be no security for liberty. . . . The rigid limitation of official power is necessary not only to prevent the deprivation of substantial rights by acts of oppression, but to maintain that equality of political condition which is so important for the independence of individual character among the people of the country.

Do I seem to labor a commonplace?

<sup>5</sup> "How France is Governed," by Raymond Poincaré (Eng. trans.). Unwin, 1913.

And a commonplace which has been labored in England for centuries? Where, it will be asked, did Montesquieu get his theory of the Separation of Powers except from the practice of the English Constitution? What was the rock from which the American Constitution was hewn? To all which I reply, that a commonplace may become so trite as no longer to command attention, still less respect; and that in course of time the soundest of principles may in practice wear very thin. Undeniably the English Constitution, as expounded in the "Books," is based upon the principle of the distribution of powers between the Executive, the Legislative, and the Judicial organs. But is there not a rapidly accumulating mass of evidence to prove that the modern practice is diverging more and more widely from the traditional principle; that the lines of division are becoming more and more blurred; that in fact, the Executive, by perpetual encroachments upon the spheres alike of the Legislature and the Judiciary, is mounting to a position of perilous pre-eminence, if not omnipotence? Half a century ago this tendency was observed with complacency by Walter Bagehot. More than that, he found the "efficient secret of the English Constitution" in "the close union, the nearly complete fusion of the executive and legislative powers." He admitted that according to the traditional theory the "goodness of our Constitution consists in the entire separation of the legislative and executive authorities," but he insists that "in truth its merit consists in their singular approximation." The hyphen he found, of course, in the Cabinet.

To those of us who were reared in the school of Bagehot there was no principle of the English Constitution so sacrosanct as this. The orderly progress, the facile adjustments, the

harmonious working of political institutions in this country were attributed, in largest measure, to the fortunate accident of the evolution of the Cabinet; to the gradual acceptance of the principle of an Executive dependent upon the parliamentary majority for the time being. What was the most egregious blunder committed by the Constituent Assembly of 1789? What was the fatal flaw in the Directorial Constitution of 1795? Was it not the failure to appreciate the subtle secret of the English Constitution, and to bring the Executive into harmony with the Legislature? And it was not France only which had blindly preferred the theory of Montesquieu to the successful practice of England. Our own children in North America had been so perverse as to commit the same sin against the light. In devising their own constitutional arrangements the fathers of the American Union had deliberately divorced the Executive from the Legislature, and had thus deprived the former of the essential strength of the English Cabinet, and had reduced the latter to the status of "a debating society adhering to an Executive."

So we learnt; so we have taught. Bagehot seems, by the way, to have ignored the fact that Alexander Hamilton and his colleagues could plead other authority than that of a mere French philosopher. They might, had they been so minded, have set the example of Cromwell against the precepts of Pym. The generation which sat at the feet of Hallam paid curiously little attention to the constitutional lessons to be learnt from the history of the Commonwealth and Protectorate. How deeply the fathers of the American Constitution had drunk at this well we are now beginning to appreciate. Of all the points upon which Cromwell laid stress there was none in his eyes so important as the

virtual divorce of the Executive from the Legislature. With Pym's ideal of a parliamentary Executive he had clearly as little sympathy as Hamilton. But the triumph of the aristocracy registered in the Revolution of 1688, and rendered effective by the accession of a German sovereign in 1714, profoundly affected not only the practice of the English Constitution but the teaching of English publicists. Thus political philosophers, from Burke to Bagehot, found the "efficient secret of the English Constitution" in the harmony secured between Legislature and Executive by the development of the Cabinet Council.

Would Walter Bagehot have regarded the "nearly complete fusion of the executive and legislative powers" with equal complacency to-day? Would he now dismiss quite so cavalierly the diametrically opposite conclusion reached by our American cousins? Is there nothing to be said for the "Presidential" system; for a more rigid delimitation of the spheres of activity appropriate to the several functions of legislation and administration?

Whatever be the answer to these questions, it must, in fairness to Bagehot, be remembered that he wrote at a moment when, by general consent, the constitutional machine was working admirably. It was the deliberate judgment of Mr. Lecky that the world has never "seen a better Constitution than England enjoyed between the Reform Bill of 1832 and the Reform Bill of 1867." Mr. Gladstone expressed a similar opinion in the pages of this Review. "As a whole," he wrote, "our level of public principle and public action were at their zenith in the twenty years or so which succeeded the Reform Act of 1832." Whether later generations will subscribe to these judgments or not, this much is certain: that since Bagehot's

day the particular tendency which he emphasized has acquired an impetus which, in the opinion of many, gravely threatens the "nice equipoise" of the several parts of the Constitution. More and more the powers so carefully distributed by the terms of the American Constitution tend, in England, to be concentrated in the hands of an autocratic Cabinet.

The extent to which the Executive has encroached upon the functions of the formal Legislature has of late been frequently remarked. It is notorious that the right of initiation has now been virtually monopolized by the Ministers of the Crown. It is not perhaps so clearly realized how rapidly the two Houses are being deprived of the rights of amendment and even of discussion. In Palmerstonian days it was no unusual thing for the House of Commons to insist upon its amendments to Government Bills, despite the opposition of the Treasury Bench. Thus in 1851 nine such amendments were carried against the Government; seven in 1854, and seven again in 1856. Not a single amendment was thus carried against the Ministry from 1874 to 1878, nor in 1889 or 1890, nor from 1897 to 1900, while in the decade from 1897 to 1906 there were only four. It may be, of course, that Ministries are increasingly sensitive to defeat in the House of Commons, and that they are, therefore, more willing to *accept* amendments than was formerly the case. But even allowing due weight to this consideration, it is difficult to traverse Mr. McKeechie's emphatic verdict: "The effective majority of the Lower House has become the unreasoning tool of the Cabinet's will, instead of its critic and master."

To what cause is the subordination of the Legislature to the Executive to be ascribed? Primarily, perhaps, to the increasing rigidity of the



party system, to the ruthless perfection of the party machine, and to the discipline maintained by the party whips. From the cradle of an infant Parliament to its dissolution members find themselves, particularly if their party be in power, in the grip of the machine. There are a few men of great wealth and small ambition—social or political—who still retain a remnant of independence, and exercise some political free-will. But unless contemporary tendencies are arrested such men will become fewer and fewer in each succeeding Parliament. They are not the sort of men recommended by party organizations to constituencies, or adopted by local caucuses as candidates. Not that the possession of wealth is a negligible factor in recommendation or adoption. Far from it. But it is a rule of the game that the wealth should be expended not upon the selfish luxury of personal independence, but upon the sustentation of party interests and the purchase of titles and honors. An evil already prevalent has indisputably been intensified by the corrupt and cynical conduct of the present House of Commons in voting to the existing members a salary out of the public purse. I remember the late Goldwin Smith saying, on one of the few occasions on which I had speech with him, that the gratuitous service of Members of Parliament was the last great barrier which averted from the House of Commons the fate which had overtaken the majority of elected Chambers. Goldwin Smith's radicalism was above suspicion; but it was radicalism of the real parliamentary type; it was that of a man who understood the genius of Representative Government, and he viewed with profound misgiving the possibility of this further concession to the demands embodied in the People's Charter. Our experience of the new system has been brief, and

it is too soon to gauge its effects upon the political life of this country, but it is undeniable that it has already given one more turn to the screw of the party machine, and has invested with a new menace the crack of the party whip. The multiplication of offices, to many of which salaries charged upon the Consolidated Fund are attached, tends in the same direction.

There are other causes even more fundamental. Of these not the least important is the belief, amounting to a superstition, in the economic efficacy of legislation. This is one of the demonic spirits which is not to be expelled from the body politic except by actual experience. King Demo is at present possessed with an innocent and unquestioning faith in the power of Acts of Parliament to bring about the millennium for the proletariat. It is true that in certain quarters—notably among the Syndicalists—there are clear signs of revolt against this superstition. Hence the frantic efforts of official Liberalism to "kill with kindness" the Syndicalist movement, and of official Trade Unionism to maintain discipline in their own ranks. These two parties still cling passionately—perhaps sincerely—to the effete superstition, but both find the existing legislative machinery too cumbrous and dilatory. Both, therefore, demand a speeding-up in the process of manufacture, and more attractive features in the articles produced. At all hazards the product must be such as will dress effectively the shop windows and will adapt itself easily to the art of advertisement. The Morrison Pill remedy was not unknown to Carlyle, but the politicians of his generation were mere babes in the business of patent medicine vendors. The demand would appear to be insatiable, and in order to meet it King Demos is induced by the caucus to invest the

Cabinet with plenary powers to translate his economic aspirations into statutory enactments.

To this end two conditions are essential: the "flexibility" of the Constitution must at all costs be maintained, and the nominal Legislature must be reduced to complete subordination.

Let us consider the latter point first. The Sovereign Legislature of the United Kingdom has for many centuries consisted of King, Lords and Commons. Of this historic and imposing structure what remains? The precise relations between the Crown and its servants still happily continue to be shrouded in some mystery, and no publicist with any sense of responsibility or even of decency would desire to intrude into that particular recess of the Constitution. But the veil is sometimes roughly torn aside. It was in the historic debate in the House of Lords on the 8th and 9th of August 1911. We then learnt from the lips of the leader of the House that constraint of an unusual, if not unprecedented, kind had been put upon the King by his responsible advisers. Lord Rosebery spoke of the conduct of Ministers as having given "an unpleasant savor to the whole of this transaction." In grave words Lord St. Aldwyn declared that "The King has been placed by the action of his Ministers in the most cruel position in which any Sovereign could be placed." Lord Crewe himself designated the recent proceedings as an "odious business." The crucial moment in that constitutional crisis was the 16th of November 1910, when an interview took place between the King, Mr. Asquith, and Lord Crewe. What precisely happened is known in its entirety presumably only to the King and the Cabinet. But no constitutional jurist can doubt that on that day the equipoise of a Constitution,

built up on precedents, suffered a severe shock. As one of the three factors of the Sovereign Legislature the Crown does not occupy precisely the same position to-day as it did up to the 16th of November 1910.

What of the other two? Much of this article has been designed to show that the House of Commons occupies a position, in a legislative sense, far inferior to what it did a generation ago. That the deterioration is due in part to the pressure of circumstances cannot be denied. Parliament is avowedly overburdened. It has no time to do its work properly. No one who has followed its proceedings in Committee of Supply can imagine that the control exercised by the House over expenditure is of a very real or effective character. Its impotence in regard to legislation has already been discussed. Gagged and salaried, the private member is expected to dedicate to the service of his party not his brains but his legs. His duty is done not in the House but in the division lobbies.

Of the House of Lords even less need be said, since its present position is avowedly provisional. Even before the Parliament Act of 1911 it was one of the least effective Second Chambers in the world. That Act has certainly not increased either its dignity or its utility, and it has deprived it of the one function which was of real constitutional significance. The Lords did possess not an absolute but a suspensive veto, and could compel a Government to submit any given legislative proposal to the poll of the people. That it was difficult, even then, to obtain a verdict on a clear issue may be conceded. But it is undeniable that the Lords did impose some check upon the legislative omnipotence of the Cabinet, and did, in a rough and ready way, secure that the electorate should be consulted before legislative pro-

posals of first-rate importance were inscribed upon the Statute Book. The Parliament Act, especially in its sinister conjunction with the payment of members, has had the effect of increasing the power not so much of the House of Commons as of the Cabinet. Upon its autocracy there is now scarcely any check whatever, except the *ultima ratio* of a formal vote of censure. And such a vote involves not only the assassination of the Cabinet but the suicide of the Commons. To the latter crime persons in the enjoyment of an easy competence are not predisposed. The three component parts of the Legislature have then suffered much both in dignity and in efficiency during the last few years. Nor can their deterioration fail to impair the balance of the constitutional machine.

For that balance is adjusted almost wholly by conventions. It is protected by no *Instrument* or constitutional Code. Will the conventions, in the altered circumstances of to-day, suffice?

### III.

Reference has been already made to the recently published works of President Poincaré and Mr. Elihu Root. It is not without significance that both these publicists lay immense stress upon the importance of distinguishing between the constituent and the legislative function; between the making of ordinary laws and the enactment of the "law of laws which regulates the exercise of sovereignty over the country." To this distinction France has become habituated by a prolonged experience—not always happy—of Constitution-making during the last century and a quarter.

The first thought [writes M. Poincaré] of this assembly (the States General of 1789) was to elaborate a written constitution which should limit the

royal authority, regulate the relations between the legislature and the executive, and protect France from the abuse of power. Since then the idea of the written constitution has in France remained inseparable from the idea of national sovereignty. . . . The constituent power is the beginning and the end of the very essence of sovereignty. *A people which cannot organize itself is a people enslaved. The constituent power must not be confounded with the legislative power. Both belong to the nation, but it is not obliged to delegate them to the same representatives, and is free to subject their exercise to different conditions.*

These are weighty words, coming from one who is not merely the first citizen of the French Republic, but is also the possessor, by common consent, of one of the keenest intellects in Europe. In particular the words which I italicize may, I trust, give pause to some who imagine that an unwritten and flexible constitution is a necessary ingredient in political liberty. It is true that they are the words of a Frenchman, but the time has surely gone by when we in this country can afford to re-echo the contemptuous sentiments of Arthur Young: "Making a Constitution, which is a new term they (the French) have adopted, as though a Constitution was a pudding to be made from a receipt." Making—or remaking—a Constitution is a task to which the people of this country also will have to address themselves in grim earnest before many suns have set.

Even more pertinent, perhaps, is the warning of Mr. Elihu Root. Insisting upon the importance of embodying general principles in a Constitutional Instrument, he says:

If there be no general rules which control particular action, general principles are obscured or set aside by the desires and impulses of the occasion. . . . Communities, like individuals, will declare for what they believe to

be just and right; but communities, like individuals, can be led away from their principles step by step under the temptations of specific desires and supposed expediences until the principles are a dead letter and allegiance to them a mere sham. And that is the way in which popular Governments lose their vitality and perish.

We in this country have, in the past, steadily refused to formulate "general principles" and have shown ourselves singularly careless of constitutional safeguards. Nor did it much matter so long as the "checks and balances" were in thorough working order. Several of them, however, no longer operate at all, and the Constitution therefore presents to the impartial observer a hopelessly lopsided appearance. And the reason is not far to seek. Except at rare intervals in our political history there has been amongst us, despite party differences and personal rivalries, a substantial measure of agreement upon what Cromwell described as "Fundamentals." So long as that agreement subsists no great inconvenience is caused by the absence of a Constitutional Instrument. But at certain critical moments the cleavage between parties extends even to fundamentals. One such moment occurred after the great Civil War. Between the views of the several parties under the Commonwealth no reconciliation could be effected. Consequently it was found imperatively necessary to reduce to writing the fundamental laws of the Constitution, and give to those laws a technical rigidity. But Cromwell's Parliaments refused to be restricted to legislative functions and claimed constituent authority as well. That claim Cromwell repudiated; a deadlock ensued to which a key was found only in the power of the sword. Lacking agreement on fundamentals, refusing to accept the limitations imposed by a written Constitution, the

nation was perforce compelled to confide its destinies to a military dictatorship.

Are we within measurable distance of another bankruptcy of the Constitution? Have the differences which divide political parties been accentuated to a degree which threatens the existence of parliamentary Government, and indeed of representative institutions? These questions I was permitted to formulate in the pages of this Review\* three years ago. The answer must, I fear, be regarded as less doubtful now than it was then. Since that time the Parliament Bill has become law; the Second Chamber has been reduced to impotence; the narrow circle within which the personal will of the Sovereign can operate has been still further contracted; the service rendered by members of the House of Commons has ceased to be gratuitous; those members have become even more dependent upon the will of the Ministry; the Executive has fastened its shackles even more firmly upon the Legislature. To add to all this: a Bill designed to effect a fundamental alteration in the mutual relations of Great Britain and Ireland has twice received the assent of the House of Commons, and should it pass a third time it may be inscribed in the Statute Book despite the determined resistance of the Second Chamber and without reference to the electorate.

In my previous article I explained in detail the nature of the machinery devised by other Constitutions for the amendment of fundamental laws. The barriers which they have erected against ill-considered innovations vary greatly in material and in construction. But the point to which I was and am anxious to direct attention is this: that there is not a single important State in the world, with the possible exception of Italy, which does

\* "Nineteenth Century and After," February 1911.

not take *some* precaution for the preservation of its Constitution. Imperial Federations like Germany, Federal Republics like Switzerland or the United States, Unitary Republics like France, Monarchical Commonwealths like Australia, Democratic Monarchies like Norway, all alike draw a distinction between the constituent and the ordinary legislative functions and provide special, though not necessarily elaborate, machinery for constitutional revision. Great Britain alone deems it prudent to permit a Sovereign Legislature to effect fundamental changes in the Constitution by the ordinary process of law-making.

It may be objected that although "rigidity" is essential to federalism, unitary States may still indulge with safety in the luxury of "flexibility." Republican France, as M. Poincaré insists, does not share that opinion; nor does the kingdom of Norway. It is perfectly true that more elaborate precautions are necessary in a Federal State, that the definition of functions and the distribution of powers must in such States be more precise, but does recent experience prove that even in a unitary State precautions are superfluous? Besides, is the United Kingdom to be classed among the unitary States? Readers of this Review have lately learnt from Mr. Herbert Samuel that there is already a large ingredient of federalism in the curious compound known as the British Constitution,<sup>7</sup> and a further infusion is promised by Mr. Samuel and his colleagues. If the Home Rule Bill really is, as Ministers profess, genuinely federal in character; still more, if it is really intended to be the first instalment of a series of federal schemes adapted to other portions of the United Kingdom, it is simply childish to imagine that the British Constitution

can continue to be either flexible or unwritten.

This last consideration brings us close to the core of the contemporary situation. We are confronted, as was Cromwell, with two issues of supreme difficulty and importance: the rebuilding of a shattered Constitution and the solution of the secular problem as to the relations of Great Britain and Ireland. There are strong grounds, both logical and political, for the contention that the two questions ought to be settled simultaneously. There is a great deal to be said for party Government so long as both parties are operating within the limits of fundamental conditions recognized and accepted in common. But some questions clearly transcend those limits. In regard to these no mere party settlement can possibly endure. No one can fail to recognize, therefore, that the powerful and seductive plea lately put forward by Mr. F. S. Oliver<sup>8</sup> is inspired by lofty patriotism and true statesmanship. Mr. Oliver is not, perhaps, uninfluenced by his studies in American history, but I can see no reason for refusing, on that account, to give him a respectful hearing. On the contrary, the experience of the fathers of the Republic may at this particular juncture be of the greatest service to ourselves. The essential problem before them, as before us, was to reconcile centripetal and centrifugal tendencies; to erect a strong central Government without unduly infringing upon local independence. They found the solution in the adoption of the federal principle, and they committed the conservation of that principle to a strong Second Chamber. Thus the American Senate is primarily the embodiment of the federal idea: every State of the Union, great or small, enjoys equal represen-

<sup>7</sup> "Nineteenth Century and After," October 1912.

<sup>8</sup> "The Alternatives to Civil War," John Murray, 1913.



tation in that branch of the federal legislature. When it is remembered that the Senate shares with the President certain executive functions, and in particular the treaty-making power, the full significance of this provision will be apparent. Has American experience any lesson for us?

I am free to confess that I have not hitherto regarded with particular favor what is known as the federal solution of the Irish Question.<sup>9</sup> It still seems to me to present grave difficulties. But what solution is free from them? Statesmanship, after all, consists in the choice between available alternatives. The Duke of Wellington's Toryism was as unquestionable as his Protestantism, but in 1829 he preferred Catholic Emancipation to civil war. May not the Unionist leaders to-day find in some form of federalism a solution preferable to the same grim alternative? Sir Edward Carson's remarkable speech at Manchester on the 3rd of December certainly seemed to suggest that his own mind was moving in the direction indicated by Mr. Oliver, and if Ulster is prepared to accept this solution no Unionist on this side of the Channel is likely to stand out against it.

There is, however, one point of essential significance which seems hitherto to have been ignored. What are to be the units of the proposed federal union? Is Great Britain to supply three or more? Is Ireland to supply one, or two or four? Are the lines of delimitation to be national or provincial? This is a vital question to which I have, as yet, seen no answer.

But whatever be the precise form of federalism adopted, two conditions are essential. The pact must be embodied in an Instrument, the articles of which shall not be open to amendment except by setting in motion

special and specified machinery, and a reconstituted Second Chamber must form part of the federal legislature. The object-lessons presented by the American Senate, the German Bundesrat, the Swiss Ständerat, not to mention the Senate of the Australian Commonwealth, cannot in this connection be ignored.

It is, moreover, unlikely that the reconstruction of the Legislature can leave the position of the Executive unaffected. But if the argument of this paper be sound this consideration will not be regarded as fatal. On the contrary, it supplies an additional incentive to the attempt. The opportunity for restoring the impaired balance of the Constitution is not one to be lightly despised. But the consideration of this question would carry me beyond the generous limits of this paper.

This much may, however, be affirmed with confidence. Federalism, if accepted as the basis of a settlement of the Irish Question by consent, will not leave other questions as it found them. It must involve a written Constitution; it must lead to the creation or adaptation of a judicial tribunal competent to interpret the Constitution; it must provide some machinery for the revision of the Constitution; it must involve a strong Second Chamber; it probably will lead to some readjustment of the relations between the Legislature and the Executive; it may lead to the adoption of such devices as the Referendum and proportional representation. None of these changes lack powerful and persuasive advocates. For each one of them individually there is much to be said. Taken together they would unquestionably predicate a revision of the whole British Constitution without any precedent or parallel in the long history of that venerable anomaly. But the process of demoli-

<sup>9</sup> See "The Key of the Empire," *Nineteenth Century and After*, November 1911.

tion is already far advanced; the temporary structure will not serve much longer; the time for comprehensive

*The Nineteenth Century and After.*

reconstruction is admittedly at hand. How much longer must we await the advent of the architect?

*J. A. R. Marriott.*

## A NEW KIND OF POETRY.

The Futurists, skilled as they are in advertisements, have shown less than their ordinary astuteness in attempting to claim for their method the art of poetry. They may play what tricks they like with the art of painting, and escape on the plea that an ignorant public has no right to ask their meaning or doubt their sincerity. A collection of telegraph wires surmounted by KUB in capitals is posed as a portrait of Kubelik, and if you object that it suggests no living resemblance, the painter replies that since it is his idea of Kubelik, misunderstanding does not matter. But words have associations which lines and colors may lack. You cannot separate them from the burden that has been laid upon them by the past. The chain of tradition, broken at our peril in any human activity, presses more vigorously upon poets than upon the professors of other crafts, and he who, greatly daring, aspires to invent a new literature avoids the shoals of ridicule only to founder upon the rocks of blasphemy.

Yet despite the impossibility of discovering a fresh method of speech, the poets in the past have always been eager to unfurl strange banners and to shout unheard cries. They have enrolled themselves gladly under the sway of vallant leaders. They have joined odd clubs and established secret cenacles. The history of letters is a history of action and reaction. The classics have surrendered patiently to the romantics, and then reasserted their supremacy. The Symbolists have ousted the Parnassians from the field, and men have owned

their decadence without fear or shame. But hitherto the progress of poetry has been gradual and delicate. As we recede from this new school or that, we perceive that what once appeared flagrant in our eyes was but a gentle change, hardly discernible at a distance. Poetry, it is true, has been modified by the temper of the time and the music of the poet. Rhymes and rhythms have been adapted to the genius of those who have used them. But there is one thing which no man has ever invented, or ever shall invent—a new art; and hitherto invention has consisted not in the antics of an anarchy but in playing the game, a little differently, according to the rules already laid down.

And it is for this reason that the Futurist poet differs radically from those who have gone before him. He tramples all the rules of all the schools wantonly under foot. He attempts to prove himself original by breaking the laws imposed upon his craft by far greater men than he. He sets his poor intelligence against the reasoned knowledge of a thousand years. He does not strive aimlessly to do something better than the masters; he is content to do something different, and in this difference he perceives a kind of virtue. Signor Marinetti, for instance, the apostle of Futurism, has arrived at what he fondly believes to be a new kind of poetry. And he has arrived at it by outraging the accepted canons of grammar and sense. His ideal is an ideal of anarchy. Other poets have admitted such obvious distinctions as exist between nouns and

verbs. He will bear none of the old restraints. His words, as well as his mind, must be "at liberty." They must not be bound together by the common links of construction. He has a special and inveterate spite against verbs and adjectives. He flings his words together like stones in a rubble-heap, and he comes no nearer to the making of a poem than an architect would come to the building of a house who should refuse to weld his bricks together with mortar or to cut his planks to suit their proper space.

His style, therefore, if style it may be called, resembles nothing so much as a telegraphic despatch. Where you are asked to pay so much a word, you may be excused if you practise a verbal economy. To save your pocket, you rely cheerfully upon the quick understanding of your audience. You employ a code of signals, which is intelligible at a moderate cost. In other words, you reduce the language to its lowest terms, and hope that your meaning will be effectively conveyed. You do not boast yourself a poet for your economy; you do not claim that your enforced concision has the merit of a discovery in style. And here it is that Signor Marinetti proves his vanity. He is not asked to transmit his poems by wire. He can plead no material cause for their formlessness. He is enchained only by a superstition of purposed originality. "Other men," says he in effect, "have used verbs and adjectives; they have bent their neck beneath the yoke of grammar; they have accepted the foolish conventions of commas and full stops. I am wiser than they. I have set my words at liberty, and what does it matter that I have enchained my mind in a fiercer convention than man ever did before?"

That Signor Marinetti, a declared anarchist, should set forth his themes in intelligible pamphlets, proves that

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he has escaped also from the bonds of logic. It should be enough for him to run a steam-roller over the past, and for the rest to give full play to his taste for expletives. The war which he has declared upon all libraries is ridiculous and ineffectual. The war which he has declared upon style and grammar proves how little he understands their purpose and limitations. He seems to think that style is a thing that you can put on or off like a hat, and that when you have put it off there is an end of it. But style is organic. It is part of the blood and bone of all good writing, and when it is omitted, as by Signor Marinetti, what is left is a mere shapeless mass of unlettered letters. Here, for instance, is a passage from his poem, to which, in defiance of his principles, he has given the title, "Train of Sick Soldiers":—

"Hohohohowling of 1500 sick men at  
the carriage-doors  
locked up before 18 Turkish gunners  
battered to pieces  
rags      tatters      caps  
officers thrown upon the  
network of iron wire pass pass at all  
costs anguish writhe  
with the short bayonet tear the mails  
rage mouse-trap."

It is not illuminating. It has no beauty of phrase or vision that we should desire it. It is not even original. The style of the Futurists was practised nearly a hundred years ago with far better effect than Signor Marinetti can hope to attain. Do you remember the rapid sketch of Rochester made by Alfred Jingle, Esq.? "Ah! fine, glorious pile-frowning walls—tottering arches—dark nooks—crumbling staircases—old cathedral too—earthy smell—pilgrims' feet worn away the old steps—little Saxon doors— . . . buff-jerkins too—match-locks—sarcophagus—fine place—old legends too—strange stories—capital." There is here a note of interest, of enthusiasm

even, which Signor Marinetti's masterpiece seems to lack. But there is no doubt about the style. We know that our Futurist is a faithful pupil of Alfred Jingle, and we only regret that he has not studied his model with a deeper attention.

The passage which we have quoted above shows Signor Marinetti in his closest adherence to convention. When he keeps the future full in view, he attains to a lyrical height of onomatopœia. Here is a specimen, which the fervents of the Future may interpret as they will:

tlaclac li il gailli  
 trrrrrrrrrrrrr  
 tatatatôo—tatatatatôo  
 (Wheels)  
 currrrrr  
 cubrrrr  
 gurrrrrrr  
 (Locomotive)

The use of brackets appears a useless convention. For the rest, this gem of eight lines owes nothing to the outworn traditions of the past. It came from nowhere; it will go nowhither. Even as a representation of the clank and rattle of a train it is imperfect, though it makes a concession to realism, of which we thought the true Futurist incapable. And if this is a fair sample of the poetry of the Future, we may take comfort to ourselves that we shall not live to see it widely popular. In truth, Signor Marinetti need not be taken very seriously. It is easy enough to break the rules, and that so far is the sum of his achievement. He has confused in his mind the accidents of life with the ultimate end of poetry. The modern world, says he, loves nothing so much as noise and speed. Therefore poetry, to be modern, must be swift and noisy. The argument is trifling and superficial. Poetry does not concern herself with the vices or virtues of material "progress." Motor-cars and flying

machines have done no more than shift us rapidly from one place to another. They come no nearer to our real lives than hats or boots. They leave human nature untouched, unchanged. If a maniac travels round a tarred track at the rate of a hundred miles an hour, it is his body only that moves; his mind, if he keep one after this hasty impact with the air, still preserves its accustomed pace. Thus speed, though it be the madness of our age, is a poor excuse of poetry. The emotions, of which poetry is the proper vehicle, are neither hindered nor enhanced because an ingenious use has been found for petroleum.

The glorification of noise is a still grosser fantasy than the glorification of speed. If noise be necessary, it is a necessary evil. Many there are who spend their humbled lives in avoiding it. It killed the hapless Jules de Goncourt nearly fifty years ago, when as a cult it was in its infancy. And for those who love it, noise exists in and by itself. Why should the musician of the future, the proper colleague of Signor Marinetti, be at the pains to express the clattering havoc of the street by means of his orchestra, when the clatter is there loud enough for any one to hear? Let him open the window, and let him rejoice if he can at the rattle and clash of the motor-car and its hooter, now shrill as a siren, now darkly rumbling like a sick elephant. If realism be his aim, there he has it, grim and menacing. He will make it no better and no worse by reproducing it accurately upon the grotesque instruments of his own invention.

The evangelists of the Future despise the past. They would, if they could, obliterate all the masterpieces. That they have nothing to put in their place but a crash and a bang irks them not. It irks them as little that, if a new art must be invented by each

generation, Signor Marinetti and his friends will taste oblivion before they taste the wine of fame. Meanwhile they condemn in a fury of scorn all the things which they do not themselves create. They gasp for breath, they tell us, in libraries, academies, and museums. Let us leave them to their racket, and confess that for us at least a museum is a pleasanter place of resort than a motor garage.

It is not only that Signor Marinetti and his friends mistake the purpose of poetry, which deals not with the transitory accidents of life, such as

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traffic and machinery, but with its eternal emotions; they are, as we have said, the declared enemies of tradition. They are not handing on the torch which they received from their fathers. They have blown it out, and will remain for ever in the darkness which they themselves have created. What they have done will not profoundly affect the world. Others, wiser than they, have trimmed and refilled the immemorial lamps of their ancestors, and the ceremony of the lampadephoria is not likely ever to be wholly interrupted.

## THE PROMISE OF ARDEN.

### CHAPTER X.

"Of course you wondered who I was," said Miss Grey.

The garden-party at the Rectory had reached an interval. It was to finish with a maypole dance and tea for the village children, and the stage we had come to was an adjournment of the guests to the dining-room, where the first impression you had was of the size of the urns. Miss Grey, who said she hated urns, decided that strawberries and cream should be brought to her in the garden, where she selected for a seat the coping of a terrace wall. She sat there as I crossed the lawn, and as I came over the grass I thought of her as I had seen her last in the wood, with her homespun skirt and nailed boots, and the freshness of the wet wood about her. Here she had changed her homespuns for muslin, and her pheasant's feathers for poppies in a wide-brimmed hat—too wide-brimmed, perhaps, she found it in the light wind that was blowing, for she sat on the wall with one hand up to hold it at the side. And it was then that I remembered the boat of Henley, and a parasol suddenly opened over a

hat like hers with the poppies in it, and then a laugh and my own name following it, given in answer, it seemed, to someone who had asked a question.

"Of course you wondered who I was," said Miss Grey.

"Did you mean me to hear, then?" I asked. She did not look at me, and did not answer; merely she laughed provokingly and regarded her drawn-off glove with critical interest.

"I really was talking about you, you know," she went on.

"But how did you know my name?"

"I didn't—not for certain." There followed further appraisement of the glove. It apparently just passed muster.

"Of course I knew it was you as soon—well, as soon as you were trying to see who I was, you know."

"But I——"

"You could only see my shoes, could you? I should think," she observed reflectively, "that you had a very bad temper. You're not a bit patient. You know, I never thought then—not when I was in the boat then, I mean—that I should ever be sitting with you here, explaining things like this."



"Explaining?"

"Well, did you ever think you would be? You gave up hope when your boat went on, I expect. Henley is such a crowd, isn't it? If you once get separated—except of course, the people you don't want to meet. They turn up in the next boat to you after every race."

"Which race was it after this time?"

"Oh, it wasn't," said Miss Grey vaguely. "You see—well, I'll tell you how it really was. I happened to be in a boat."

"At Henley, wasn't it—on the river?"

"I knew you'd get impatient. I happened to be in a boat, with—with a friend of my brother. He had been staying with us in the spring, because he was home on leave, you see, and his mother suggested—she thought of it all her self, he told me—that I should come up to London for the season and stay with them, and—well, go about, you know. So I did. So his sisters—of course, they'd done it all before. but I hadn't; I simply went everywhere. Well, then, you see, I was in that boat."

"That was still at Henley, wasn't it?"

"Yes. And you came by in another boat, and you were really rather rude, because you passed our boat along—well, anyhow till I'd got my back to you, and then the boats got jammed."

"Both?"

"Tight. I tried. When you went by, you see, you were reading a letter. And of course I read it too. I always do; don't you? No, I suppose you don't; but I've often found it a help. I'm terribly deceitful; Mrs. Band says so. Well, the letter began 'Dear Mr. Markwick.'"

"You don't remember how it ended, do you?"

"No, I've forgotten. It was dull all through. But you see I knew your

name. And then I remembered there was a man named Markwick who was a friend of Professor Sargesson, because I once heard him talking about a book of yours to Mr. Band, and so—well, now you see the connection, don't you?"

"It seems clear," I said.

"Well, I thought I'd just see if it was you. So as the person I was in the boat with happened to be asking questions about Parson's Hanger, and what we did down here, and so on, I thought there'd be no harm in talking about you."

"No harm?"

"Well, I couldn't say much, could I? He wanted to know who my friends were, and I had to have a few. But I couldn't say really much about you, except to describe what you looked like, and so on. Most of it was guessing."

"Most of it? I never heard—"

"No, that was the stupid part of it. Your boat moved on—you weren't paddling, of course—and so you didn't hear. But I had to go on, because—well, he got so furious."

"Then did you—"

"Yes. Of course I knew you would never know, so you couldn't mind. Besides, I told him it was all make-up afterwards—at least, most of it."

"He seems to have been quite interested in me, then?"

"Well, he—of course, I couldn't go on inventing about you for long. He would ask such a lot of questions. It was only for a few days, though. It all ended."

"What ended?"

"Oh, everything, you know. It had to. There was the season come to an end, and I had to come back down here, and—well, I simply couldn't go out to India, you see. And I'd spent quite a fearful amount of money—really fearful. Roderick was just furious with me. He swore I should

never go up to London again. But what can you do?" demanded Miss Grey, with a shrug of her shoulders. "You must have things."

"Of course."

"And then just see what they come to. You can try and try, and it's no good. Things simply wear out. You must have boots, I mean, mustn't you? Well, shoes cost just as much. And then—look at this frock."

"I have been looking at it."

"I know you have. You've been looking at everything I've got on. No, I don't mind, you know. It's what it's there for."

"I'm very sorry," I began.

"Oh, but don't be! Why, just think. Suppose I were to put on this frock and this hat and these shoes and nobody looked at them. I should just cry, if I ever did such a thing. Do you know this is the only party of any kind I've actually been to this year? Think what that means—for me, I mean. Why, last year—Oh dear," broke off Miss Grey with a sigh. "Just do think. It's the second of June now, so that means the Fourth of June is on Monday, doesn't it?"

"According to the calendar, it would," I said.

"Well, I went to the Fourth of June at Eaton last year. Then there was the polo at Hurlingham, and Ranelagh, and the Eaton and Winchester match, and the meet of the Coaching Club, and Ascot, and Lord's, and Henley—and dances pretty nearly every night, if you wanted to go to them; they didn't, of course, but I did. Oh dear, those dances!" sighed Miss Grey.

"Didn't you get rather tired?" I asked.

"Tired? Tired of dancing? I've never been tired yet, and I've danced every dance right through the evening—oh, ever so many times. I'm just as strong as a little horse, you know. I don't look it, I know. Roderick al-

ways says I'm so thin, he wonders I don't break; but I shan't ever break, and I'm not really thin. I wish—Oh, don't I wish!—I was going to a dance to-night. But there it is. If you can't, you can't. Can you?"

"I can't."

"The worst of it is," observed Miss Grey, "that one grows older. Now I'm twenty-one—going on for twenty-two. Well, that's all right, of course. But last year was the only season I've ever had, and I don't suppose I shall ever have another. And when I'm twenty-three—well, you begin to settle down rather when you're getting on in the twenties, don't you?"

"I do," I said. "But why, another year—"

"She'd never have me again. Never! That's the worst of that, too. She's quite right. I don't deserve it. I was just—oh, just a little brute, you know. Just a little beast, I was. I tell myself that over and over again. No, I know I don't deserve it, and never shall. But oh, my goodness, how I do want it all! And now," said Miss Grey, suddenly and in a most cheerful voice, "let us go across and look at the maypole."

The shadow of Mrs. Band occupied the terrace path, and the voice of Mrs. Band came from the steps above. Mrs. Band summoned me with majesty.

"You're in for it," said Miss Grey. "I'm not. I'm off to the maypole. Good-bye till we meet again." She was away from me in a moment, and as I looked at the color of the poppies and the straw in her hat, and the way she went across the grass in the sun. I thought of Atalanta racing over the field of corn and never bending a stem. And she chose the very moment when I stood by Mrs. Band's side to turn round as she did in the wood and laugh over her shoulder. Mrs. Band surveyed me through a lorgnette.

"I thought I should have found you

with the children," remarked Mrs. Band with immense dignity.

"They're over by the maypole," I said. "Peggy has been practising some of the little ones. She has been helping the schoolmistress with the dances for the last week."

"She has been invaluable," said Mrs. Band. "A child who, properly controlled, and directed in the right way, would leave us with few doubts as to her future. But I almost fear, Mr. Markwick—I have grave fears, Mr. Markwick—that without control, without supervision, without discipline —"

"She is really wonderful, isn't she?" I observed. "Invaluable, as you say. I don't know what Miss Lovejoy would do without her."

Mrs. Band surveyed me with increased dignity. "I think, Mr. Markwick—I think in the circumstances I must not discuss Miss Lovejoy. The Rector and I have always held it to be our duty to interfere as little as possible—as little as is compatible with the position of those who—who are, in short, in our position. But I had not intended to discuss these matters now; a future occasion, no doubt, will arise. What I wished to ask you to do, Mr. Markwick, at the moment, is to be so good as to conduct dear Mrs. Marriner, to whom I think I introduced you when you arrived, and another dear friend of mine, Mrs. Porch, to the further lawn, where the children are to perform their country dances. If you will return with me to the dining room—"

"Why, of course," I said; "I shall be delighted."

"I had hoped to have been able to introduce you to other friends of ours," went on Mrs. Band. "As a friend of the dear Professor, Mr. Markwick, you will be sure of a welcome among—among our older neighbors. I cannot help feeling a little surprised that the

Rector should have decided, rather than give you the opportunity of making the acquaintance of persons of position in the neighborhood, to introduce you to—to one who—"

"The Rector has been very kind," I said. "He has introduced me to a number of your guests whom it has been a great pleasure to meet."

"He included among them the young lady whose spoon and saucer you are carrying?" Mrs. Band spoke with an air of superb detachment, but as though the spoon and saucer would not be used again.

"No," I said; "I think Murray introduced me."

"Murray introduced you?" repeated Mrs. Band, standing still before me.

"Now I come to think of it, I believe it was Allen."

"Allen?" echoed Mrs. Band. It was less an echo than a detonation.

"Well, but—" I began.

"Did she—er—ask to be introduced, may I inquire?"

"I think, as a fact, she did. We met in the woods. But—"

"She asked. I can believe it. Mr. Markwick, I can believe it. You do not surprise me; you merely add to what I knew before." Mrs. Band proceeded with majesty to the dining-room window. "Youth we can excuse, Mr. Markwick. Indiscretion, Mr. Markwick, might be forgiven. But when modesty—when maidenliness —"

"I think I see Mrs. Marriner," I said. "If you would introduce me to Mrs. Porch—"

Mrs. Band surveyed me finally and completely. She suppressed a sort of snort, I was introduced to Mrs. Porch, and Mrs. Porch, addressing Mrs. Marriner, expressed herself as anxious above all things to see the children's country dances. Mrs. Marriner was equally anxious; she agreed, generally speaking, with Mrs. Porch. Mrs. Mar-

riner was a faded and gentle person who appeared to find the world very kind to her, and to enjoy watching it; Mrs. Porch, a little younger than Mrs. Marriner, was a little more robust. Mrs. Marriner was a widow; Mrs. Porch's husband was in London: so much I learnt.

We crossed a terrace to a lawn beyond, where the ribands tied loosely to the foot of the maypole fluttered in the wind. We arrived almost last of the company, for Mrs. Porch seemed to think it necessary to stop more than once on the way to explain to me precisely why her husband was in London—a proceeding which was only interesting because her insistence on the point persuaded me that he was in reality at home. When we had come to the maypole I could see no children; then I caught glimpses of white behind a clump of rhododendrons; there were rustlings and subdued voices.

The Rector stood a little in front of us, apparently rather nervous; he looked at his watch. It was perhaps a little after the time when the dance was supposed to begin; were we waiting for anything? For Mrs. Band, doubtless, I thought, and turned to catch sight of her emerging from the dining-room window. She carried a dinner bell.

But we were not waiting only for the dinner bell. There was a sort of preliminary scuffle behind the rhododendrons; then Allen appeared, dragging by the hand not, as I expected, some unwilling village child, but Miss Grey. She stood for a moment leaning back as he pulled at her; then, I think, she caught sight first of Mrs. Band in the distance, and then of the Rector on the lawn near us; then she made up her mind and came running with Allen across the lawn.

"Dora's ill," exclaimed Allen.

"Dear me, dear me!" The Rector's nerves evidently received a severe

shock. Who was Dora? Miss Grey explained.

"Poor Dora Merridew is feeling faint. She plays the violin, you know, for the dance. She isn't well enough to play." ("Quite sick, she said she felt," commented Allen) "And so I wondered—Peggy wondered—should I play instead? I can, you know. I thought I ought to ask you," concluded Miss Grey with a meekness of words that was nowhere in her mouth or eyes.

"My dear! My dear Miss Dacia! Anything, of course, anything! Anything that Peggy decides! Anything that you wish, my dear Miss Dacia!" It was plain that from the Rector Miss Dacia could indeed obtain anything she wished. And she and Allen, before the dinner bell was half way from the dining-room, were back behind the rhododendrons.

The dinner bell was borne to an open space in the middle of the lawn. Mrs. Band, evidently unaware of any difficulty, passed the Rector on her way. He attempted vainly to indicate what had happened.

"One moment, my dear Septimus," proclaimed Mrs. Band. "We must be punctual; we must keep to our times and seasons." She rang the bell sharply, and a hush fell on the assembly. She looked round upon her seated guests. "May we ask one favor? May we beg for complete silence? It is of the utmost importance that the children should not lose one note of the music." No one apparently desiring to do otherwise than keep silent, Mrs. Band lifted the dinner bell in the air. She rang it sharply again, three times.

From behind the rhododendrons there emerged a very shy, spectacled young lady—Miss Parmiter, the village schoolmistress. Coming alone into the open, it evidently appeared to one of the guests, a portly colonel with a fierce moustache, that she needed en-

couragement. He therefore applauded loudly. He was immediately turned upon by Mrs. Band, who surveyed him through her lorgnette with surpassing dignity. As she stood there, reducing the unfortunate gentleman to explosive apologies, Miss Merridew's substitute took up her place with the violin next to the piano. The schoolmistress gave her the note; she propped her music in its place, and piano and violin struck up together. Mrs. Band lowered her lorgnette, turned majestically round, and with an air of beneficent approval raised her lorgnette again. Then the piano and the violin came into her line of vision, and she appeared to become suddenly rigid as she took in the meaning of what she saw.

"Well!" gasped Mrs. Band.

"Sh-h! Sh-h!" stuttered the enthusiastic colonel.

The Rector stepped forward and timidly touched Mrs. Band's arm. She turned, gesturing towards the piano; her bonnet shook. He explained with deprecating whispers, and the situation unfolded itself to her. She swept majestically to a chair.

Then the village children danced in—a chain of children in pairs. They came a little hesitatingly from behind their screen, and for a moment I am sure the poor schoolmistress was doubtful whether they would not falter altogether; then the lilt of the dance music was picked up by the violin, and the children's feet came in time with the touch of the bow, and there they went round the lawn, with the music pulsing through them and through us who watched them. There were perhaps twenty children, white-frocked and black-stockinged, and their fair hair and dark hair tossed in the wind as they swayed their heads and waved their arms and swung their colored ribands. There was a real rhythmic sound about that dancing that suited the lilt of the tune, for the children

wore boots as villagers would, and the beat of their feet on the lawn was the merriest thing; they heard it and knew it themselves. The spirit of the dance was over all the lawn, and it remains with me whenever I hear that music now and look back again at the lawn as I saw it—the joyous swing of the children's bodies and the ripple of their hair, the buoyant life of them in their rough country frocks and stockings; and behind them a figure standing a little apart, with the music going through her from head to heel, as you could see by the way she moved with it, and by the sweep of her bow on the strings. Suddenly the music ended; the children had danced themselves behind their screen; the lawn was green and empty. The schoolmistress rose, to join the children; the younger girl stood for a moment with her violin and her bow at her knees; then with the pulse of the music still in her, she came across the lawn—straight to Mrs. Band. She waited till the colonel's applause had ceased.

"Do please excuse the mistakes I made," she said, with the utmost humility. "Dora I know would have played it better. But they wanted somebody quickly, and the Rector said I might, and so——"

"I heard no mistakes," said Mrs. Band, and, looking round, realized that she had spoken too sharply. Mrs. Marriner was gazing with smiling admiration at the slight figure with the violin; Mrs. Porch nodded approvingly; the lawn hummed its interest. "We ought, indeed," she went on, "the Rector, and indeed all of us—we ought to be grateful to you for stepping into the breach," she concluded graciously.

Miss Grey raised her eyes. "I was afraid I might not be doing—doing right," she explained modestly. "I knew the Rector had forbidden me to play when there was the first idea of the dances, and so I thought——"



"My dear!" exclaimed the Rector. "Forbidden Miss Dacia to play! Never, my dear!"

"Oh yes! Mrs. Band told everybody about it quite from the first," said Miss Grey, with the air of one who submitted to pastors and masters without complaint. "So I couldn't play without asking, could I? Oh," she broke off, turning round, "there's Peggy signalling to me. Now it's the maypole—no, another dance." She was off across the lawn, and as she passed me, with the brim of her hat shading her face, there was just sufficient doubt as to whether or not she was shaking with laughter. Mrs. Porch was doubtful, by her expression; Mrs. Marriner gazed after her with unquestioning approval; Mrs. Band looked sharply at me.

And so the other dances followed, and then the maypole, a merry romp of tripping children, fluttering frocks, interwoven ribands; the music stopped and began again, and round the children went the other way, singing their easy May-day song, with its monotonous rise and fall, up and down; not that I should ever find real monotony in it, any more than in the croon of wood-pigeons, or the cuckoos that called all that June day through the garden trees. And at the end of it all, when Mrs. Band had conveyed her personal thanks to the shy school-mistress, and Miss Grey stood smiling at the portly colonel, who protested that he couldn't have believed it possible, somebody asked for Peggy. But Peggy was gone. She had followed the school-children over to their tea-table, and there she reminded me of what I had forgotten, that she had promised to be home early.

"I suppose the nursemaid's out as usual?" I asked.

She looked at me quickly. "I can easily take the boys home by myself, if you would rather not come."

"No," I said; "nursemaids in these days are very hard worked."

"I really can take them home alone," said Peggy doubtfully.

"Come along," I said.

We walked back, Murray and Allen, as soon as they got out of the Rectory garden, beginning a sort of go-as-you-please race punctured by flying hats. They disappeared at the bend of the road, where the path to the Grange lay across the fields, and as we followed them a carriage turned the corner of the road behind us.

"It's Dacia," said Peggy, looking round. And the victoria drew up beside us.

"A lift?" suggested Miss Grey.

"We're just going across the fields, thank you," said Peggy. "The boys have gone that way."

Miss Grey nodded. "But what a hurry you're all in. I thought at least you would have waited for me when I asked you," she said, turning to me.

"But surely you didn't——"

"Oh yes, I did. At least I meant to. Because—well—you see, my brother wants to meet you. So will you come to lunch on Monday?"

"I'm so sorry," I said. "I'm afraid I can't. I shall be with my sister."

"You couldn't put it off a day? No?"

"I can't put off the Fourth of June. I'm taking her down, you see."

"The Fourth of June?" repeated Miss Grey. "I'd forgotten."

"Perhaps your brother——" I began.

"But how simply detestable of you," she went on. "To remind me like that. You might have thought of something else to say."

"But I just said what——"

"I know. But you oughtn't to have. You know what I told you. Well," she said serenely, "it will serve you right if it rains. I shall be down here,

nice and quiet and out of the crowd.      can't, you can't, can you? That's what  
 You're sure you won't come and      I always say. Good-bye."  
 lunch with me? No? Well, if you      And she drove on.

(To be continued.)

Eric Parker.

## DRAMATISTS OF TO-DAY.

### III.—John Masefield.

Mr. Masefield is not first and foremost a dramatist. He has not made play-writing the work of his life, but he has given us in "The Tragedy of Nan" a drama that is one of the most interesting works of our modern theatre. Mr. Masefield does not seem yet to have decided to what literary form he intends to give his ripe powers. Novels, narrative poems, and plays come from his pen in almost equal numbers. At the present moment he is following out the direction given to his art by the inspiration which created "The Everlasting Mercy," an inspiration which, whatever its origin, has been very powerful, and has already been responsible for four long poems, "The Everlasting Mercy," "The Widow in the Bye-street," "Dauber," and "The Daffodil Fields."

Any one reading Mr. Masefield's "The Tragedy of Pompey the Great" would not be likely to argue from that play a work of such vigor and charm as "Nan." For "Pompey" is surely a failure. There is no drama in it, no opposition of forces, nothing but a succession of incidents, some of them telling enough in themselves, but leading from one to another without resistance. The interest is never forced to any tension. There is nothing to concentrate it. It is aroused and then left to exhaust itself. Mr. Masefield had the opportunity of obtaining a splendid clash of temperaments in the opposition of Caesar and Pompey, but not only does Caesar not appear in the play, but his influence is scarcely felt. We are told about him. Couriers

and messengers come from his camp, but Pompey is never allowed to struggle with him. Pompey struggles with himself, and as we see almost from his first entrance how the qualities of his mind are balanced, we are so sure of what he will do with his fate, that it seems unnecessary for the dramatist to tell us. The play is a psychological analysis of Pompey's mind, and a rather sentimental one at that. I am not quite sure of Mr. Masefield's intention with regard to Pompey—whether or not he believes in his hero and his nobility. For Pompey is meant to be noble, or else to think that he is noble, whereas really he is nothing of the kind. Sometimes he is nothing more than a conceited prig. He is always hesitating to follow up his advantages. He acts like an incompetent dreamer, and his fate is the fate of such a one. Mr. Masefield, of course, is not responsible for Roman history, but he is responsible for the interpretation he gives to his hero's actions. Generals and men of the world do not talk in the fashion in which Pompey speaks in these lines. The scene is when Pompey's ship is off the coast of Egypt and all on board are agitated over the menacing attitude of the soldiers on the shore.

*Theophanus.* In our present state we are not even free from insult.

*Pompey.* An upright soul is safe.

"Death is a little thing to the loss of a conscience," says, on another occasion, the conqueror of Mithridates. Both remarks have an unpleasant smack of unctuousness and hypocrisy about them, incompatible with the

nature of a free spirit, a leader of men. They are not true in *their particular context*, and because they are true in a deeper sense, they offend.

The play begins well. It has a most dramatic opening. A mysterious voice is heard beyond a balcony of Pompey's house, warning his servants.

"Stamp your foot, Pompey. Aha! Ha! Pompey!" it cries, echoing the Consul's saying that if he stamped his foot Italy would be filled with soldiers rallying to his standard.

In spite of its dramatic unsuccess, the play has some notable moments of tender and deeply felt writing of the kind which show Mr. Masefield at his best. He can do this kind of thing very well: "There is a kind of nobleness blowing about the world. Into people's hearts. Into the minds of poets. Strangers from the city of wisdom," or this, when the servant Antistia is speaking to Philipp of their long-deferred marriage:

"When you kiss the dry old hag, Philipp, you'll remember these arms that lay wide on the bed waiting empty. Years. You'll remember this beauty, all this beauty, that would have borne you sons."

But the language of Pompey on the whole is a strange mixture of realism and poetry, of symbolism and superficial accuracy. Sometimes the characters speak like folk in a modern comedy in a way that is shocking when it is alternated with lines of heroic language. Mr. Masefield is not consistent with his own convention. Biblical simplicity and purity are mixed with modern flippancy. Here is a piece of dialogue from the first act:—

*Metellus.* Still at the house? He must have had my note.

*Julia* (to Cornelia). Good-bye, dear. It's been so nice seeing you.

We hear Theophanes referred to as "that Greek writer-fellow," and Cato

is spoken of by one of the characters as "grandpapa giving out buns and telling them (the plebs) of good King Numa."

"The Tragedy of Nan" may possibly have been written after "Pompey," although it was published before it. The difference in technique and imaginative force between the two plays is great. In "Nan" we have consistent action, and the language difficulty is solved, or nearly so. There are scenes of great pathos and beauty. All the same, I am not sure that it is a tragedy. It is certainly not in the classical sense, though it may be in the national. Judged by classical standards, it is a poetical melodrama with a strong romantic flavoring, but then that applies also to several of Shakespeare's tragedies, which, according to the Greek ideal, are too violent and physical for tragedy, which is a spiritual sensation.

The story of "Nan" is fairly well known to modern playgoers, but in order to assist an examination of it, it may be as well to recapitulate it.

Nan Hardwick is an orphan, a charity girl, the daughter of a man hung for sheep-stealing. She is taken in at the house of her uncle, Mr. Pargetter, and maltreated by the entire family. Mrs. Pargetter behaves like a fiend to her. Dick Gurvill, a neighboring yokel, makes love to her, but Mrs. Pargetter wishes him to marry her own daughter Jenny, and tells Dick that Nan's father was hung. Dick then throws over Nan at once, especially as Mrs. Pargetter dangles the prospect of a dowry for Jenny before his eyes. It is a scene of great poignancy in which Nan learns the true character of her lover. Then there arrive Home Office officials who bring the news that by the confession of a shepherd Nan's father has been proved not guilty of the crime for which he was hung. They have with

them fifty pounds as compensation for Nan Hardwick. Dick now turns to her again, but she stabs him, and we are left to understand that she will drown herself.

In "Nan" Mr. Masefield has maintained a consistency of language that is a great improvement on the disorder of "Pompey." Every one speaks in dialect of a rough, brutal, but racy character. All idiosyncrasies of personality are subordinated to this limitation of the play with perhaps the exception of Nan herself, who tends to drift away from the convention into speeches of a purer and more symbolical beauty. These lines of hers accentuate the fineness and dignity of her character, but perhaps they accentuate it overmuch to the point occasionally that we lose touch with her reality. There are some moments in this play which are really notable. The love scene between Dick Gurvil and Nan has a rich beauty. It is very rough and primitive, and is touched with the fragrance of the soil, but behind the uncouth compliments, the rough tenderness of the rustic lovers, we feel the purity of passionate truth.

*Nan.* They must have looked beautiful, those women in the old time. There was songs made of them. Beauty be a girt gift, Mr. Dick.

*Dick.* It is wonderful in a woman.

*Nan.* It makes a woman like God, Mr. Dick.

*Dick.* You be beautiful, Nan; you be beautiful.

*Nan.* Ah, Mr. Dick.

*Dick.* You be beautiful. You be like a fairy. The rose. You be beautiful like in my dream.

*Nan.* Ah! Let go my hands. Let go my hands.

*Dick.* You be beautiful. Your eyes. And your face, so pale. And your hair with the rose. O Nan, you be lovely. You be lovely.

That is one of the two finest love scenes in modern English drama. The

other, of course, which is not unlike it in character and quality, is in Synge's "Playboy."

Mr. Masefield shows great restraint and finish in the scene when Dick repudiates Nan. She does not become extravagant in word or gesture. Nothing is allowed to come between the audience's imagination and her sorrow. It is as if the playwright just opened a window in her soul gently, and allowed us to look there for a moment.

The first two acts of "Nan" are the best; the third has several weaknesses. In the first place, we may fairly call the arrival of the Home Office people so unexpectedly and so very conveniently a rather circumstantial *dénouement*. It is not referable back to anything in the previous action. Again, the pathos of the last act, and to a certain extent its very action, is too much at the mercy of the Gaffer's sentimental outpourings. There is no doubt we get too much of the Gaffer and his "gold rider" and his "white flower." In the second act, when he fiddles for the country folk in the Pargetters' house, he fits delightfully into the picture, but Mr. Masefield draws too much on him in the final scenes. His eternal refrain of death and doom is overdone. We should refuse to believe in a fate so maudlin and undignified, and the Gaffer stands for the voice of fate like some of the fools in Shakespeare's plays. At the same time he says things of great imaginative beauty. The imagery which the idea of the tide evokes is often wonderful. The most beautiful thing in the play, in the pictorial sense, is the description by the old Gaffer of the fishing-nets carried away by the tide to be found cast up on further shores full of golden flag-flowers and heavy with apples that the flood has stolen from orchards. There is a symbolism

behind all this description which is so effective because it is so subtle and intangible.

Mr. Masefield has written two other plays, "*The Campden Wonder*" and "*Mrs. Harrison*," both of them little dramas of dialect cast in the manner of "*Nan*." It is the mode which best suits his art, which is Chaucerian and Doric in spirit rather than classical.

"*The Campden Wonder*" tells how a ne'er-do-well son, looked down upon by his family, brings them all to the gallows by accusing himself and them of a murder. It is a big subject to treat of in a little drama in three short scenes, and the psychology of it is skimped to the plot, which it covers scantily in places, but since we somehow detect the author's intention behind this, we are not conscious of any violent inconsistency in the treatment. There is a scene of considerable power and fervor when the mother bids her two sons farewell in the prison before going to execution. It is cruel as Mr. Masefield has made "*Nan*" cruel, but then he is rather a cruel artist, whose dramas just miss that spiritual tenderness which is the note of pure tragedy. Neither "*Nan*" nor "*The Campden Wonder*" makes us any the more in love with humanity, and true tragedy does do this. The action of these plays arises from motives that are perhaps too personal and peculiar. Mrs. Pargetter's venom against Nan is quite a conceivable passion, but, after all, it is an unusual one. John Perry's obsession that he must bring ruin on his brother and his mother even at the cost of his own life denotes a very extraordinary state of mind, a quite possible state of mind, of course, but for all that an improbable one.

"*Mrs. Harrison*" is a sequel to "*The Campden Wonder*." It is quite short and not very important. The character of Mrs. Harrison is drawn with great skill. We are shown a

husband and wife *intime* in a scene of fine lucidity. The dialogue is very natural. The undercurrent of movement flows with a rhythm that is precise and strong.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Masefield will give us some more plays like "*Nan*," which, with all its faults, is one of the most real plays of the modern English theatre. Mr. Masefield's art moves best by means of symbols whose exterior is rough and primitive. The Teniers-like characterization which he employs in his dramas of country folk is the method which suits him best. He must have some rich unwritten dramas of the "*Nan*" type within him. Let us hope he will give us them soon.

#### IV.—*Stanley Houghton.*

Mr. Stanley Houghton's plays are an interesting sign of the times. They give us the impression of Lancashire beginning to think for the pleasure of thinking, for thinking's own sake, for, of course, no one can impugn the quality or quantity of the practical or applied thinking of which the northern county is capable. Mr. Houghton contrives to get ideas into his plays, but he gets them there with stealth and cunning, almost, one would think, as if he hoped they would not be too much noticed by his hard-headed Manchester audiences. "How much dare I hint it to them," he seems to say, "and how much hint it to myself, that there are systems outside Lancashire, that there are social conventions of respectable ancestry which are not those of Wigan, or Preston, or Hindle?" Mr. Houghton does this kind of thing very slyly. He introduces no violent contrasts of character into his plays between representatives of the modern spirit and the old. A suggestion of revolt made to appear very dreadful to most of the people in the play, a daring notion at which all are



badly shocked, an unconventional action which creates a catastrophe—it is in such points that his ideas reside. These Lancashire dramas are provincial dramas written for provincial audiences by a provincial, yet for all that they contain far more ideas than any of the plays that are constantly being produced in London, with the exception of those by four or five dramatists of the intellectual school.

Mr. Houghton's peculiar excellency as a playwright seems to me to lie in his sense of action and composition. His plays are business-like; their mechanism, if not highly intricate, works at any rate smoothly and quickly. With this sprightly dramatic sense of his own he mixes a stock sentimentality of the theatre, and adds ideas or theories, often Shavian in their origin. These ideas or prejudices are frequently introduced by means of irony. Sometimes we are not sure at whom the dramatist is laughing. It is then, perhaps, that he is most successful. Here is a scrap of dialogue from "Independent Means":

*Sidney.* Six months ago you forbade me to go to see a performance of Bernard Shaw's "Man and Superman."

*Edgar.* I was quite right. It's not fit for any decent woman to see.

*Sidney.* Yes, that's why I wanted to see it.

*Edgar.* In your presence I won't say what I think of the man, but I'd give something to meet him face to face.

That sounds very amusing, but it is quite likely that there are people of the type which Mr. Houghton portrays who would see nothing comical or absurd in such views as Edgar expresses. The men with whom the dramatist deals are nearly all of them like that. Edgar, in fact, is quite a modern compared with some of the characters who appear in these plays,

with Jeffcote, for instance, in "Hindle Wakes." Jeffcote, I am inclined to think, is overdone. But it is by these occasional touches of exaggeration in his character-drawing that Mr. Houghton is able to introduce ideas into his plays, to tincture them with a very dilute Shavianism—Shaw diluted with the Mersey. When he pokes fun at his provincial types, Mr. Houghton has a habit of making them talk as their subconscious minds might think, but as they certainly would never speak. Old Jeffcote, for instance, is a prince of snobs, a jolly, fat-headed, hypocritical old humbug, but there is a suspicion of cynicism in his frank declaration of a sentiment like the following which would inhibit it from his godly and order-loving mind. "Why did I buy a motor-car? Not because I wanted to go motoring. I hate it. I bought it so that people could see Alan driving about in it and say, 'There's Jeffcote's lad in his new car. It cost five hundred quid.'"

Mr. Houghton turns the canting self-deceptive kind of talk in which some of his backwoodsmen and backwoodswomen indulge to very witty purpose occasionally. After the news of Alan's having chosen Llandudno as the place for his week-end escapade with Fanny comes out, Mrs. Jeffcote remarks, "I shall never be able to fancy it again. And I'm so fond of the place." The humor in that is dry and ironical, and it is a curious contradiction that we find in the same play passages of the most vaporous sentimentality. Alan is speaking to his fiancée, and is being very humble and miserable about his week-end with Fanny at Llandudno. He says one or two things which are simply comic, at which any sensible young woman would have laughed. "I thought about you when I was kissing Fanny," he tells his fiancée in a poor scene. "I tried to pretend she was you," he con-

tinues, wallowing in humbug, and—climax of impudent hypocrisy so astounding as to be laughable—"O, the awfulness of having another girl in my arms and wanting you." Not bad, that, for a young man who quite deliberately took the other girl so as to undergo this excruciating "awfulness." Of course, it may all be ironic and intended to show the good folk of Hindle what dear old humbugs they are, but one rather fears it is Mr. Houghton's notion of nobility of character.

This dilemma confronts a reader of Mr. Houghton's plays again and again—that he is not sure whether the serious bits are ironical, while some of the flippancies suggest a serious intention. This subtlety is not all to Mr. Houghton's credit. It derives partly from the fact that the style in which he writes is far from being clear. It is a mixture of several conventions or styles—stock comedy with modernist social philosophy and Shavianism, and his own natural wit and sentiment.

One of the most noticeable among the social ideas which make up Mr. Houghton's stock-in-trade is the feminist feeling which pervades his dramas. In "Hindle Wakes" the only two people who command our respect are the two women, Fanny and Mrs. Jeffcote. Indeed, they celebrate their unique superiority over the other folk in the play in a few lines where they seem for a moment, although on different sides, to turn sympathetically towards each other.

*Fanny.* Ah, you didn't want us to wed.

*Mrs. Jeffcote.* No.

*Fanny.* You were straight enough.

*Mrs. Jeffcote.* I'm sure this is the best way out. I couldn't see any hope in the other.

In "Independent Means" by far and away the best person in the play is Sidney, who puts every one right, de-

fies all opposition, and only allows her husband to return to her after a separation, due to his pride and incompetence, by indulging in a gross sentimentalism which the ordinary vigor of her character does not lead us to expect. Mr. Houghton, in fact, allows his feminist tendencies to run away with him, for he makes Sidney so much more real than any one else in the play, so much better equipped with wit and common-sense, that we almost fail to believe in her loving a person like Edgar at all. "Hindle Wakes" has a heroine but no hero. Fanny is the person round whom the whole action revolves. Fanny is the play, and her decision in the last act not to marry Alan is the moment for which all that goes before is preparatory.

It is to be noticed that there is a certain motive which runs through four or five of these plays, which crops up again and again, and is evidently one of the basic instincts of Mr. Houghton's art. I mean his attitude towards the older generation, towards parents, guardians, and those in a position of domestic authority generally. Really, in some ways, Mr. Houghton is a kind of Luther of the domestic hearth. His feelings towards the older generation are extraordinarily antagonistic. They seem even almost personal. Whereas in Molière and the old French dramatists it is the husband who is generally made the ridiculous person of the play; in Mr. Houghton's comedies it is the father or the mother who are satirized and held up to scorn as ignorant bigots and tyrants who have no sympathy with youth. We see this in "The Younger Generation," a play written round the theme itself. In "Independent Means" the idea occurs again. It persists in "Hindle Wakes." Jeffcote is represented as dominating his household like a benevolent demon,

giving his children money in order that it may reflect respectability and credit on himself, as recognizing no liberty for his offspring but such as is conceded by his old-fashioned parental notions on the subject.

"The Younger Generation" is quite Shavian in its definite dialectical purpose. The Kennion household is simply put on the stage in order to show how ridiculous was the old-fashioned kind of parental authority where freedom of thought, speech and action was forbidden to the younger generation. It is bias which makes Mr. Houghton take up the attitude he adopts, a theoretical bias, such as Mr. Galsworthy shows in his social plays, such as Mr. Shaw exhibits in his. For there is surely nothing essentially ludicrous or tyrannical in the idea of elders. One nation at least has founded a religion on the idealization of ancestry.

But the most remarkable instance of this obsession, this bitter animus against fathers and mothers as domestic authorities appears in "The Fifth Commandment," whose very title is saturated with meaning that awakens curiosity as to whether its purpose is serious or ironical. This little play is a savage satire with something of the venom of a Swift about it. We are shown a typical Houghton interior, vaguely reminiscent of Dickens with an atmosphere partly realizing Lancashire, and partly obtained from theatrical tradition, unreal where it is instinctive or sentimental, real only where it is theoretical or biassed. We are shown Mrs. Mountain, a *malade imaginaire*, Nelly her daughter, Bob Palater, Nelly's suitor, and a Mr. Shoosmith, who has paid court to the invalid. The action of the little play, which is presented with Mr. Houghton's usual ingenuity, shows us how the lives of two young people are ruined by the elder woman's sickly selfishness, for she withholds her con-

sent to their marriage or gives it under such agonizing conditions of self-pity that the bond between the two young people breaks under the unnatural strain. Shoosmith, too, is frightened away from the invalid, who with the utmost composure in the world, sits down to enjoy her ailment in peace, comforted by the presence of Nelly secured to her once more.

To sum Mr. Houghton up, he has, first of all, the dramatist's mind. He is more concerned with the action of his play than with anything else, and that is the great thing. In this point he is superior to some first-rate English playwrights with whom in other qualities it would be absurd to compare him. His plays, in spite of the crudity and the timidity with which they express their intellectual conceptions, are plays of ideas. Even the most irresponsible of them has a definite intellectual notion entangled in it somewhere. There is the presentment of an awakened intelligence behind all this rough movement of ugly middle-class Lancashire life, a curiosity, a sense of youth. On what may be called—to use a crude enough definition—their instinctive side, there is not so much sign of a fresh point of view, of detached and keen sensations. The sentimental portions of the plays are blurred. They are smudged in according to the old formula. They endorse the ineptitudes of our poorer magazine standard of sentiment and romance with its flaccidity and sugary monotony.

The bulk of Mr. Houghton's plays deal with Lancashire people in Lancashire settings. But with his representations of their amusing provincialisms, Mr. Houghton cleverly mixes his own tonic ideas, his own, that is, by proper artistic assimilation. In vigor of plot and action, he is quite the equal of many older English playwrights whom it would be indiscreet

to mention. It will be very interesting to see what this playvright will do when he comes to town, so to speak. In one sense, of course, he has already come to town, but so far he has not given us a play which shows

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that he is capable of an artistic representation of metropolitan life as rounded as he has given us in his dramas of the fertile but savage North.

Edmond Storer.

## THE STATE OF ALSACE AND LORRAINE.

All the splendid words of Maurice Barrès and the others have been far less efficacious than one single ugly word employed by a lieutenant. Till the other day the thought prevailed in England that these conquered provinces had gradually been absorbed into the German Empire, and that such of the inhabitants as still resisted or protested were some noble families and probably some individuals to whom a lost cause, if it be a picturesque one, never can appeal in vain. So many people when they thought of Alsace thought of nothing but the monument of Strassburg in the Place de la Concorde, and they considered that the garlands strewn upon it only differed slightly from those pious decorations which are annually placed around our monument of Charles I. And now we see that, after more than forty years, it needs no more than one offensive word to set the old volcano smoking. If the Emperor and his advisers had not acted promptly and sagaciously the smoke would have burst into fire, and this would surely have spread down to Colmar, up to Metz.

On the other hand, we must not, on account of this, imagine that the Reichsland's only hope is for incorporation in the French Republic. Many loyal subjects of the Kaiser are inclined to make a stand against the army's arrogance. And even if in Alsace the resentment is not anti-military only, but disloyal also, yet if

does not follow that there is a corresponding loyalty to France. There have been various interpreters of the volcano's rumbling voice. . . . One is too liable to judge with wisdom that comes after the event, but in the autumn of last year I spent some weeks in walking through Lorraine and Alsace, conversing with officers and conscripts, foresters and shopkeepers, barristers and priests, vagabonds (for whom there is a special prison), mountain postmen, and the owners of vineyards; certain impressions formed themselves in my mind. That there is discontent you see at once, and if it is more difficult to know what they desire, perhaps that is a difficulty they themselves experience.

One must, of course, distinguish between Alsace and Lorraine, especially that portion of Lorraine which lies round Metz, the *pays Messin*. This is extremely French, a fact which was recognized by Dr. Bentzler, the famous Bishop of Metz, when he arranged for the French language to be represented at the Catholic Congress in August. His move was not merely just but astute, for the French Government had been losing many Catholic friends on the other side of the frontier, on account of its conduct towards the Church. Alsace—in whose local Diet, by the way, there is also a Catholic majority—is far less of French than of Germanic origin, the dialect being rather like that of Baden. One does indeed hear more



French than German throughout the two provinces, but this is partly due to the fact that even the most cultured classes habitually talk the German dialect, which is unpleasing; and, as they themselves are conscious of this, the French tongue is often preferred. There are parts of the country where French is used because German is scarcely understood, and there are parts, further east, which before 1870 had German for the language of the schools. But, speaking roughly, one may say that, with the exception of the *pays Messin*, the German authorities have less trouble with Lorraine than with Alsace, the former being to a large extent engaged in factories and ironworks and mines instead of agriculture; so that the Lorrainers come to be more like the ordinary laboring man whose preoccupation is with capital. The 90th Infantry Regiment has gone from Saverne (or Zabern) in Alsace, so that in Lorraine it may cool down. The natives of Lorraine will tell you that they simply are much shrewder than the Alsations, and that by not tilting against a wall of iron they have managed to obtain for themselves a much more agreeable life than has fallen to the lot of their brothers. But I believe that both Alsations and Lorrainers would, upon a referendum, vote in overwhelming numbers not for French and not for German citizenship; they would ask for more or less autonomy, perhaps like Luxemburg within the German Zoll-Verein, perhaps like Switzerland or Belgium. Perhaps a South German Catholic Prince, as Maximilian Harden suggested, would be acceptable to a majority. What most of all they wish is to be left in peace.

One of the most interesting persons whom I met was Abbé Wetterlé at Colmar in Upper Alsace, a prosperous and disaffected town, where Hansi, the

famous cartoonist, is constantly having his paper and himself suppressed. The Abbé Wetterlé is the editor of another weekly paper, *La Nouvelle d'Alsace-Lorraine*; he sits in the Diet at Strassburg and in the Reichstag at Berlin. He tells you that before Napoleon the provinces belonged indeed to France, but with no great enthusiasm. After all, the population is much more of the Germanic stock. But certain of Napoleon's generals and admirals came out of Alsace, hundreds of Alsatian soldiers shared his triumphs, and from then till 1870 Alsace and Lorraine were, on the whole, quite happy to be French. On this analogy it would be possible for an outstanding man, say the Emperor William, to make them as enthusiastically German. And one should acknowledge that, in the more difficult task of capturing the popular imagination by peaceful methods, a great deal has been attempted, with labor and tact, while something has been accomplished. It is said that after the recent affair at Saverne the solution of the problem was due to him, and that the regiment, with its offending officers, was at his instigation sent to Hagenau and Bitsch, the latter, at any rate, being a most drastic change—it is a colony of corrugated iron sheds on a manœuvring field some four miles from the interesting little town; the usual practice is for regiments to spend a few weeks of the summer at this "Truppenübungsplatz," the second largest of the Empire, where, amid the undulations of the ground, amid the pine-woods and the heather, it is much more pleasant, if more arduous, than in barracks; and although at the canteen all things except beer are more expensive, yet, as I was told by a military telegraphist, it is more beautiful in summer than the barracks. To march out at this time of the year, however, from the comfortable bar-



racks of Saverne—erected as a palace by the Cardinal Rohan of the neck-lace—must be the reverse of pleasant. Thus the Emperor has punished those who have destroyed so much of his long, highly creditable work. Whenever he is at his castle in Lorraine he is most affable; his son, Prince Joachim, was recently attending Strassburg University, and it is said to be the Emperor's dearest hope to hear on German soil the shout of "Vive l'Empereur!" Alsations and Lorrainers find their way into his bodyguard at Berlin, and upon the numerous occasions when he has unveiled a statue on the battlefields near Metz or Wörth he has been very courteous to the natives and the French. It must be with exasperation that he sees the folly of a few of his subordinates, both civil and military. Yet one asks how anybody could have hoped for a successful outcome, seeing that—in addition to other handicaps—it would be almost an impossibility to have in the occupying regiments no foolish young lieutenant and no coarse non-commissioned officer. Several months ago there was a midnight scene in Strassburg station, when a sergeant publicly rebuked his officer and snatched away his sword with which the ruffian was about to cut down a civilian who was with a lady, one whose favors had been formerly bestowed on the lieutenant. "It is conduct of this kind," so a Strassburg paper reported the sergeant to have said, "which makes us so unpopular." Of course, the semi-ostracism which is suffered by the officers does not increase their amiability; at Saarburg I was told by a Prussian member of the civil service that the position is, especially for his wife, nearly intolerable. In certain parts of the country there is indeed some social intercourse, but here again, to make the custom general, one requires

that the officials should have something near akin to the Imperial tact. A great improvement has been made; at first a horde of highly unsympathetic functionaries occupied the land, where the reception one expected would have no attraction for a sensitive or kindly person. It was here, at the beginning, that a capital mistake was made, for there is infinitely more understanding between an Alsatian and a South German, especially a Bavarian, than between an Alsatian and a Prussian; yet it was from Prussia that the horde descended, and it is not easy to remove the lamentable errors they too often wrought. There is now a regiment of Bavarians permanently at Metz, but the bonds which tie the Alsatian of Germanic origin to the Prussian of, more often than not, Slav origin are still too close. Yet you may object that even if Alsace and Lorraine had been exclusively occupied by South German functionaries it would still have been beyond them to placate these provinces, the difficulties being so tremendous. You may point to the German colonies, which presumably attract the South German also—have they been successful? Has the German any sympathy for those whom he administers, if they are not as he is? Does he not suspect that no fidelity can really dwell among a population who are equally at home in French and German? Would even the most jovial Bavarian be able to overcome the everlasting opposition and to win the hearts of the inhabitants? Well, there would not have been this everlasting opposition but for all the pin-pricks and the measures of repression. Germany has not obtained the love, not even the acquiescence, of the Reichsland; to a considerable extent it is her own fault.

After the war—when, of course, all the French officials were replaced by

Germans—the most terrible tales were told in towns and villages as to the character of the new masters. The utmost barbarities were awaited; no surprise would have been felt in some of the remoter villages if the officials had combined the mediæval habits of the French aristocracy with cannibalism. And it is the great, great fault of Germany that she did not entirely disappoint these expectations. We must remember that they were themselves most grievously disappointed; for a century their poets and historians had held before them the old tale about the brothers whom they must rescue. It appeared to them that the land which had belonged for such a long time, nominally at least, to the Holy Roman Empire, and where the speech was a Germanic dialect, would leap for joy at being saved from further servitude. But whereas Alsace had been French for two centuries, all the Governments, from that of Louis XIV. to that of Napoleon III., had respected the national language, customs, and traditions. You will often see a wayside crucifix, erected under the French and with a German inscription. One day a general officer complained to the first Napoleon of the jargon which the soldiers used. "What does it matter?" replied the Emperor. "They speak German, but they kill in French."

And there were those who fancied that the different German methods would have a successful end. What resistance can continue for ever? In 1874, at the elections, it was difficult to find a candidate; nobody was anxious to go to Berlin. Then, with enormous majorities, the "protesting deputies" were elected, and from the tribune of the Reichstag an orator, M. Teutsch, gave utterance to the sacred sentiments of Alsace. Gambetta did the same service in France, and in reply the Germans laid a rougher hand

upon their prey. It seemed as if Alsace could do nothing; prosperity was ebbing from her, money passed across the frontier owing to emigration, legacies, and marriages; industries were obliged to seek a new market, and the intellectuals, the young people of the well-to-do classes, and, in fact, nearly all the natural leaders of the people, withdrew from the country. Would not the others be drilled into good Germans? And would not the German system of rewards for turncoats be successful? . . . It is astonishing that a people as intelligent as the Germans, who, for instance, have at the head of municipalities such practical and highly trained officials instead of our successful tradesmen, so that the slums of a large English provincial city are not reproduced in a similar German one—it is astonishing that such a people should suppose that it will answer better if they hang on certain individuals a decoration or a dignity, instead of winning all the population with that tolerance and kindness the French had used. . . . In 1870 there was perhaps a little more French spoken in Alsace than during the seventeenth century, and a little less than is spoken to-day. And even the German emigrants are drawn into this movement. An official, says the Abbé Wetterlé, arrived at a village and asked two children on the roadside where was the gendarme. The children shook their heads and indicated that they did not understand German. So the official repeated his question in French. "Oh!" cried the children, "he is at our house; he is our papa."

The—from a German point of view—deplorable condition of the country has been advertised abroad through the stupidity of a lieutenant. It is more than doubtful whether, if attention had not been directed on to Alsace for another ten years, there would

have been any progress towards assimilation. So profoundly is this felt by some observers, who point out that Alsace is in many ways a source of weakness to the Empire and who look into the future, that they have proposed that there should be an absolute change of policy. Let Alsace be given the same rights as any other State in the Federation. But the Pan-Germans answer that this is impossible; for fear of treachery they cannot even let Alsatian officers ascend beyond the rank of colonel; there are three or four Alsatian colonels in the German army, and more than sixty Alsatian generals have served in the French since 1871. Well, if you veto that proposal, let there be some of the more French districts handed back to France in exchange for an African colony. This idea has the support of Maximilian Harden, who is by far the most influential journalist in Germany, although perhaps his power has slightly weakened.

It is in times of crisis that a people stands revealed. In ordinary times the citizen has little leisure for what is beyond his daily work; the peasant gazes at the soil, the merchant does not love disturbances. And though the recent demonstrations did not spread beyond Saverne, we may deduce from that one town a good idea of what is the condition of the country. There are some Alsations who proclaim their loyalty to Germany with all the vehemence at their command; some others, wearied with long waiting, have retired into their tents; between these two extremes there are all shades of intermediaries. "Are Alsace and Lorraine," the traveller asks, "still French?" And one should answer him, "They are not German yet." The Frenchman who has read his Barrès and the others often is extremely disappointed when he finds that the average Alsatian is a merry and industrious, not a sorrowful,

austere companion. But the Frenchman who stays long enough to penetrate into the people's soul will find that it has not become a German soul. X

At a large hotel, such as that of Wangenbourg in the beautiful forest, there is scarcely heard a word of German, 60 per cent of the guests being of Alsace-Lorraine and perhaps 35 per cent from the east of France; and if a public announcement is made after dinner, relating, say, to a poor woman of the neighborhood whom it is proposed to succor, this is made in French, and afterwards an apologetic gentleman will repeat it in German. But these are not the working classes. What of them? It is impossible that after passing through a German school and German regiment they should preserve for France, of which they only know by hearsay, the same devotion as was in their parents. Yet we find among them a great hatred not for what is German in itself, but for the German arrogance and persecuting spirit and for qualities which nobody could blame, but qualities the contrary of an Alsatian's.

"Français ne peux,  
Prussien ne veux,  
Alsacien suis."

This is the Alsatian's cry. He does not think it likely that the German Government will make a bargain with the French, although it has been pointed out by publicists that Alsace and Lorraine are the sole obstacles between a Franco-German understanding. We need not speculate on what the Germans may be some day forced to do, but of their own free will it certainly does not seem probable that they will ever let these provinces be either French or independent. So that now it is the aim of Alsace, while preserving her old memories and not renouncing any friendship, to secure as much autonomy as possible. The rivalries of poli-

tics have sown the seeds of discord here and there among her children—it is not as in the truce of God which followed on the first years of the occupation, when the Protestants of Mulhouse begged of Canon Winterer to represent them in the Reichstag and the Israelites put forward Monseigneur Dupont des Loges as candidate—but when it comes to patriotic questions then there is no rift. They will not have it urged against them that they have keen sympathies with France, where many of their friends are living, many serving in the army and the civil service. They fulfil their duties towards the Empire, but they will not have their individuality suppressed by strangers with whose customs and mentality they are at variance. *Alsacien suis*.

The conqueror begins to recognize that with the application of mere force he does no more than to drive further from him those whom he has not absorbed. The heavy hand is out of place in Alsace, where a paper flourishes (at intervals) which, like the Munich *Simplicissimus*, would not be possible in Prussia. *Dur's Elsass*, printed partly in French, partly in German, and partly in dialect, displays the excellent cartoons of Hansi and Zislín when those gentlemen are not in prison. An amusing one this summer showed a nude recruit in process of examination by four military doctors and two professors. One of them is listening to the heart-beats of the candidate, while in a gramophone the music of the "Wacht am Rhein" is being played. This is to test the fitness of the man for any military post of confidence. The only method for the Germans, if they do not wish to have this problem always with them, is to send to Alsace such a Governor again as von Manteuffel and such a Secretary of State as von Koeller, the great man of Schleswig-

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Holstein, he to whom the story of the gendarme which we have related really happened. There is now among the Germans not much confidence in the Alsations' loyalty; those regiments in which they serve—the so-called "volunteers" can serve at home if they come forward at a certain age—will at the declaration of war be sent instantly to the French frontier, but in twenty-four hours they will be replaced by regiments from the interior and they themselves will be sent elsewhere. Let there be an end to pinpricks which are often ludicrous, as recently when the German wife of an officer at Metz was heard to use the hated language on an island in the Moselle which is rather like our Ranelagh—no person under a certain rank, however, and only three or four old Frenchmen have the *entrée*. This lady's French was pretty bad, although a man who did not know her thought she must be a Parisian, and an order was exhibited requesting that in future only German should be used upon the island. Naturally the old Frenchmen still continue to converse, not always without laughter, in their own tongue. And at Strassburg when a jeweler removed to another shop he made an announcement on two placards of equal size, in German and French. He was condemned three times, and even in the austere Court of Appeal at Colmar. He avenged himself by hanging up another placard with the words: "*Hier spricht man deutsch*." The Alsations are not dull; they know quite well that a lieutenant can be very foolish, very unimportant. If they always knew that the law would not discriminate between themselves and him, if the Germans would only, like von Manteuffel and von Koeller, understand what it means when a man says "*Alsacien suis*," one would be more hopeful for the future of the German Empire.

Henry Baerlein.



## THE CITY MAN IN '60.

Mr. James Beckett shaved with the best of his four razors, and, in going to the fringe of hair that he allowed to grow under his chin, was so fortunate as to cut himself but once. Mrs. Beckett, hearing the familiar ejaculation, ran down to the cellar and brought with great care a small piece of cobweb to be placed on the injured spot. He combed forward side whiskers and in using the brush saw—by aid of a hand mirror—that the parting at the back of his head was straight and accurate.

"Your slippers are just inside the door, dear."

Mr. Beckett answered his wife's announcement with a slight clearing of the voice that was not intended as an expression of thanks, but only as a sign that he comprehended. The slippers had been presented to him on his latest birthday by the two daughters (a trying occasion, when he had to be good-tempered in the morning); they were ornamented with beads worked in the pattern of Prince of Wales's feathers, and he had kissed the girls and told them—to their considerable relief—that nothing could have been more suitable, or in better taste. In them, and shirt-sleeved, he now padded down the staircase and into the hall, where he took from a peg an alpaca jacket and a smoking-cap, worn in hours of ease; the little housemaid was engaged there, and, catching sight of him, dropped a curtsy, and taking her brush and dust-pan flew to the kitchen.

"Where are the children, Maria?"

"They are out on the croquet lawn, dear."

"No business to be out on the croquet lawn," he retorted. "Morning dew most dangerous. Cold strikes upwards, and result is—" He dis-

missed the idea of giving a lecture on health. "Tell them I'm down." He sat at the head of the large long table that had, at the other end, the protection of shining American cloth on a space where the tray was to stand. The *Daily Telegraph* (Mr. Beckett prided himself on being well in the forefront of political thought) hung over a chair, with some idea of drying itself in front of the fireplace; the time being June, the stove was filled with a kind of gilded string, and an elegant fall of parti-colored paper ribbons hung upon a hook. Mr. Beckett pointed as his wife was leaving the room, and she came back hurriedly to transfer the journal from its resting-place to the table. An ormolu clock on the black marble mantelpiece struck, in deep tones, the hour.

"Morning, papa!" A respectful chorus of voices.

"Eight o'clock," he said, precisely, "is the time appointed for the breakfast meal. Not three minutes past. Say grace, one of you."

The housemaid, entering, arrested herself, and drooped eyes, as the boy of the family, in a tone of voice only used on these occasions, said "For what are about to receive, Lord make truly thankful." They all murmured "Amen" and a very brief pause ensued.

"Now then," remarked Mr. Beckett, turning to the maid, "bustle up. Don't stand there all day."

He took charge of the distribution of ham and eggs, not because he liked the task, but because it was his duty as the one responsible for providing the feast; he set aside one or two slices that recommended themselves to his taste. A large breakfast cup of tea was handed down, from the opposite end. "Let me know, dear,"



begged his wife, "if it's not to your liking." The sound he made in reply to this hinted that he would most certainly not fail to register a complaint, if he found it necessary. The newspaper was propped against a glass sugar-basin, and the family waited, deferentially, for the usual scraps of information, together with comments.

"Great Heavens!" he cried. "Good gracious!" They turned heads in his direction. "This is extraordinary."

One of the rules of the household was that no one should speak when the mouth happened to be occupied with food, but from this regulation—as from several others—Mr. Beckett reckoned himself exempt.

"Twenty thousand," he exclaimed. "Twenty thousand. Now I wonder what our friends on the Continent will say to that? Twenty thousand!" His family knew better than to offer any remark. "I always said the idea would succeed, if it was only properly carried out. But twenty thousand! And apparently Her Majesty," the children glanced up at the portraits of Queen Victoria and her Consort as though expecting them to bow—"Her Majesty is going to Edinburgh in August to do the same thing there." He turned suddenly on the boy. "What country is Edinburgh the capital of?" he asked sharply.

"Scotland," his mother whispered. "Scotland, if you please, papa," he amended.

"Ah," said Mr. Beckett, disappointed, "that was a guess, my lad. Your school doesn't pay nearly enough attention to necessary knowledge. I must see the headmaster about it. Education is going all on the wrong lines. Where is Canton?" The boy answered quickly and correctly: his father gave up the attempt to floor him. The boy ventured to inquire whether the *Great Eastern* had reached New York, and was reminded by the

entire strength of the family that children should only speak when first addressed.

"Mamma," said Mr. Beckett to his wife, "he must join them later on."

"Beg your pardon, dear?"

"I repeat," with a division between each word, so that the meanest intelligence should understand, "he must join them later on."

"But join what, dear?"

Mr. Beckett, with a gesture, sent the newspaper on the carpet: the two daughters competed for the honor of recovering it. "Haven't you been listening? Don't you know what I've been talking about for the last quarter of an hour? Are you deaf?"

Mrs. Beckett shook her head.

"For fifteen minutes by the clock"—he pointed to the mantelpiece for verification—"I've been telling you about the tremendous review held by Her Majesty in Hyde Park yesterday. Twenty thousand men there. King of the Belgians, Princess Alice, and Prince Arthur present. Volunteers, mind you. I've always argued that one volunteer was worth half a dozen pressed men. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes, dear," she replied, "I understand now."

Breakfast over, and thanks for the meal having been given to One above, Mr. Beckett offered a few criticisms on it, and complained that two eggs remained uneaten; he mentioned that those who wasted invariably came to want. Standing upon the hearthrug that presented a vivid representation of a red lion and a purple tiger, he returned to the question of defence of our native shores, and delivered an address upon the subject, his family giving their best attention.

The maid, trembling visibly at the commanding tone of his voice, removed articles on the table; substituted for the white cloth one of vivid

scarlet, and, with respect, brought his elastic-side boots: he sat upon the horsehair sofa, and with groans and other signs of irritation and pain, pulled them on. Mrs. Beckett sent the three children out of the room quietly, and herself remained within call. He consulted a watch of good size, and asked why the breakfast-room clock was a minute and a half fast; his wife apologized, and promised the matter should be seen to. She assisted him with his frock coat. The elder girl brought a large white rose and a pin, and Mr. Beckett showed amiability as it was fixed in the buttonhole: he pinched the girl's ear, declared she was becoming quite a woman, and gave the smoking-cap into her charge.

"James, dear," said his wife, "you won't forget that we are asking in a few friends to-night."

His black bag was ready in the hall. The umbrella stood in its proper place. His silk hat, narrow brimmed and flat brimmed, was upon the right peg. The morning journal had been re-folded. These articles he collected, and giving a casually directed kiss to his wife, and a sharp call of farewell to the young people, he hurried away.

The omnibus, with three horses, was waiting outside The Jolly Cricketers tavern, and Mr. Beckett slackened speed. Other City men were making for the same objective, some older than he, a few younger—Mr. Beckett often referred to himself as being in the prime of life—and clear of his family he took a more genial expression of features, and by the time he reached the conveyance, presented an aspect most jovial. He responded to the touch of the hat given by the driver and conductor, agreed with them that the day was likely to be warm. Mr. Beckett had some right to one of the seats next the driver, but these were already taken by two

youths who smoked cigars, and ignored the look he gave: the conductor held his bag, and Mr. Beckett climbed the upright ladder at the back of the omnibus, and took a place on the side of the knifeboard where the sun would not stare into his eyes.

"Well, Charles, well," he said to the conductor, who had followed with the bag, "who are we waiting for, eh?"

"Rightly speaking, sir, there's three of 'em, but young Mr. Ruggles is the one that counts. There'd be the deuce and all to pay if we went off without young Mr. Ruggles."

"Ruggles," said a passenger over his shoulder, "has done well lately. I hear, over sugar."

Back to back, they discussed the matter and agreed that youth, nowadays, was in too great a hurry.

Tardy passengers arrived, and one brought news that Ruggles was taking a day off, in order to prepare for a special engagement; information that caused the conductor to remove the block from under the wheels, and shout "Soon as you like now, 'Arry," and the horses went, the landlord of The Jolly Cricketers waving a good-bye. In Cold Harbor Road the conductor sounded his horn, and the omnibus stopped for three more passengers, who complained of the age of the straw inside the conveyance; from here the journey became express, passing more leisurely traffic, and coming out at Camberwell Green, taking Walworth Road, passing the Elephant, and making for the Borough in good style. A few alighted in High Street; Mr. Beckett went over the bridge, and descended near the Monument. The whole course had taken him, he found on reference to his watch, less than an hour, and he congratulated the driver, patted one of the steaming horses, calling it a good boy.

His offices were on the second floor

of an old house in St. Mary Axe, reputed to have been, in the past, the dwelling of a foreign ambassador, and still possessing some indications of superior birth in coats of arms, modelled in dark wood, with elaborate ironwork at the staircases. Also the windows were small, and the panes framed in lead, keeping the sunlight out in a manner more suited to the diplomatic profession than to the corn business. The firm dated back to a remote period, and, as a consequence, Mr. Beckett's own name did not appear on the doors, but everybody knew he represented the house, and if they did not know, it was no fault of his. Murmur of conversation in the outer offices ceased as he entered.

"Morning, gentlemen."

"Good morning, sir."

"Where's Pycraft?"

The senior clerk came from the inner room, the door of which was marked "Private." He rubbed his hands and bowed; gave an apology on behalf of the absent member of the staff.

"When he comes," ordered Mr. Beckett, sharply, "send him in to me, Mr. Harley, at once. At once: d'you hear?"

The post letters were neatly arranged on the shining mahogany table, foreign despatches uppermost, and Mr. Beckett, without removing his hat, applied himself to those that concerned business, and were signed by Mr. Beckett's humble, obedient servants. Certain of the communications made him frown, and he sent for Harley; heated discussions ensued. An important envelope contained a card that restored good temper. The Master and Wardens of the Worshipful Company of Linners requested the honor of the company of James W. Beckett, Esq., at Dinner to meet the Right Hon. The Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs of London. In another en-

velope, even more important in appearance, the Duke of Oxford conveyed the information that he had been requested to take the Chair at the forthcoming Anniversary Dinner (particulars enclosed) and hoped he could count upon Mr. Beckett's support on that occasion. His Grace, in a very friendly letter, mentioned that a donation from Mr. Beckett of Five Guineas would constitute him a Steward, but this did not include the price of the Dinner, which had been fixed at Twenty Five shillings, without Wine. In a personal touch, the Duke expressed the earnest hope that the gentleman he was addressing was in the Enjoyment of good Health, "a Boon denied to those on whose behalf I am venturing to make this Appeal." Mr. Beckett unlocked a drawer and took out his cheque-book. He could have been described, not only upon a tombstone, but in places where truth was expected, as a generous-hearted man, but his charity had strict limitations. His general idea of hard-up people was that they deserved to be hard up, and "the more you do for 'em, the more you may." To crossing-sweepers he sometimes gave coppers, but this was in return for services given; besides, several members of the profession had been through the Crimean War. Mrs. Beckett assisted three families down in her neighborhood, and the two girls often made some article useful for the wear of the benighted heathen. Mr. Beckett never thought of going eastward of Aldgate Pump, excepting for the purpose of visiting the dock on business; he had a lingering suspicion that it would be wise to arrest, and keep in the Model Prison, all who could not earn a competency; any case, reported in the journals, headed "A Tender Hearted Magistrate" met with his severest condemnation. More than once, in his dreams, he had been gar-

rotted by a couple of scoundrels, and his watch and purse stolen.

"Young Pycraft has arrived, sir."

"Tell him to wait until I am ready to see him."

This was one of the methods favored by authority at the time, and, I am informed, not yet extinct. Mr. Beckett had dealt with his post letters, had given instructions regarding them; there was nothing for him to do until he strolled across to the Corn Exchange in Mark Lane; but he fussed with papers on the table pretending to be greatly engaged, the while Pycraft stood in the outer office rather like a schoolboy awaiting punishment.

"Now, young man, what have you to say to yourself about all this coming late, and neglecting your duties, and goodness knows what all?" The amateur might have assumed that, an explanation being asked for, this was the moment for an explanation to be given; Pycraft knew his place, and remained silent. "You appear to be under the impression that you can play fast and loose; let me tell you, sir, that you are mistaken. I granted you, at your special request, a holiday yesterday, and I can imagine, from your late arrival this morning, how you spent it. You stayed in bed until noon; when you went out your first visit was to one of these flaring gin-shops that are such an unmitigated curse to the metropolis; from there you staggered—"

Young Pycraft listened with proper respect, as his superior drew the detailed picture. Mr. Beckett took the ebony ruler to emphasize comments, and having finished, with a slighting reference to Cremorne, brought it down on the table in a startling way, and shouted, "Now sir! I have made up my mind how to deal with you, but I am quite willing to hear anything you have to say." He felt that no Alderman, sitting to dispense

justice at the Mansion House, could have made a fairer offer.

Young Pycraft was sorry, but the fact was he had overslept.

"Are you aware, sir, that I am out of bed, winter and summer, by half-past seven?"

Young Pycraft, bowing in grateful acknowledgment of the information, pleaded that, as a volunteer, he had attended the review the day before. It was a tiring day; late before he managed to get to rest. He slept—so Pycraft described it—like a log of wood.

"A very good simile," said Mr. Beckett, with a slight relaxation of features. "A log of wood. Now, we don't want logs of wood in St. Mary Axe. We want men. You will be paid up to the day before yesterday, and the firm will endeavor to get on, as best it can, without your services. Good-day to you, sir."

Mr. Beckett, as the youth went, stroking his upper lip and chin with an open hand, went to look at his reflection in the mirror and assured himself that he had behaved with dignity, force, and decision. "A set of incompetent young rascals," he remarked. By this phrase, he referred to all members of the staff, and, indeed, to all workers in the City, under the age of twenty-five.

At the Exchange, where he found that wheat was 57/7, barley 33/6, and oats 26/8, he was assailed by other members concerning the question of lunch, a subject to which he brought his best attention. A new place had been opened, it appeared, in Leadenhall Street, and a daring proposal of an experiment was made that Mr. Beckett declined to entertain. What guarantee, he demanded, was there that a good chop or steak could be obtained there? Was there, or could there possibly be, any assurance concerning the wine? He ventured to

say that the new establishment would, in all-probability, attempt to introduce a foreign style, presenting dishes that no one recognized, and calculated to play the very deuce with one's digestive powers. "I can't afford," he declared, frankly, "to tamper with my health!" Some matters of less importance regarding Garibaldi's successes and a murder in Walworth were discussed. The silk-hatted gentlemen differed on many subjects, but they agreed that there were no longer any profits to be made in the corn business. Some blamed Mr. Cobden, others were inclined to censure Mr. Bright. It was an off day—Thursday—and no great pressure of work existed.

At one o'clock precisely Mr. Beckett, with the solemnity of a man approaching an important rite, went up a passage off Fenchurch Street, entered a door on the left, and found himself in the presence of a white-aproned man cook, a large grill, a red-hot fire, and a well-selected group of raw meat. He made his choice, entered the dining room, took his usual place near the window, and the waiter brought a basket of household bread. All the patrons retained their headgear, and, despite the heat, windows were closed; it is doubtful whether they were ever opened. A few gestures, in salutation, and Mr. Beckett adjusted his table napkin; studied the fly-blown wine list with as much interest as though it possessed the charm of novelty.

"Yes, Robert," he decided. "As you say, a bottle of the usual."

You see Mr. Beckett, at this hour, at his best. Having done a good, sound morning's work, he had earned the right to a good, sound meal; he told himself that more than one City man had come to an untimely end by not taking care of himself. The large steak came, and Robert the waiter said, confidently, that he thought it

would prove difficult to find fault with it. Robert brought potatoes in their jackets, and a square slab of cabbage on a silver plate. The wine came in a cradle, as though it were extremely youthful instead of being of a ripe age, and, poured out, showed itself of good color; passed, with honors, the test of being moved, to and fro, under the nose. At the first sip, Mr. Beckett became brighter, more animated in appearance. One or two customers, on entering, called to him cheerily as "Jimmie" and he responded; his neighbor, who had arrived at the apple-pudding stage, inquired whether anything had been heard of poor old Crayford, and Mr. Beckett was able to reply that Crayford was on his last legs. They speculated on the amount Crayford would leave, and to whom he would leave it.

"Not too warm for a glass of port, is it?" inquired the neighbor, hopefully. By slackening the pace, he had arranged for a dead heat with the Stilton.

"I ought not to take it," said Mr. Beckett. And began to describe some trouble with joints.

"As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb," declared the neighbor. "Robert, a small bottle of—you know what."

Our City man found on leaving that the world appeared a good deal brighter and better than he had previously imagined. He smiled at it until, discovering himself near to the Minorities, it occurred to him that he had taken a wrong direction, and even this unusual blunder was viewed with a certain tolerance: he said his mind was occupied with other subjects. On the way to his office, he encountered a boy singing a comic song:

I wish I was with Nancy.

I do, I do.

On a second floor, for evermore  
I'd live and die with Nancy



—and Mr. Beckett, humming the air, considered it engaging and tuneful.

"A lady to see you, sir."

"What name?"

"I have an idea, sir, that she is young Pycraft's sister."

"How these people do worry one, to be sure! They might know that once I've made up my mind——"

Miss Pycraft, entering the inner room with very proper confusion, bowed, and apologized for the intrusion: Mr. Beckett surveyed her steadily. The girl was dressed in the fashion not quite of '60, but of a few years earlier: tartan plaid skirts, well flounced and extended, and a Zouave jacket; her bonnet had green roses, and sat rather prettily upon her carefully crimped black hair. Miss Pycraft, after some difficulty in calling up powers of speech, got well under way, and talked volubly. A dress-maker, it appeared, in Theobald's Road: Arthur—her brother—and she were the only supports and props of an aged mother, who, without them, would collapse. Arthur had come home at midday with news of the unexpected disaster; his efforts to find a fresh situation had, up to that hour, been without results.

"Of course, of course," said Mr. Beckett. "What did he expect?"

Miss Pycraft, greatly perturbed, resolved, so soon as her brother had gone out again, to take a step that many, she feared, might consider unmaidenly, perhaps almost mannish.

"Now, now," as the young woman found her handkerchief. "You mustn't mind too much what people say. Compose yourself, and—by the bye, you may like to sit down."

Miss Pycraft replied with gratitude and propriety that she knew her position in life better than to dare to accept the offer. The fact was that Arthur had so often spoken of Mr. Beckett's generous temperament, his

kindness to the clerks, his high reputation in the City—"He thinks the world of you, sir!"—that she, Miss Pycraft, determined to come along, inside an omnibus, not grudging the sixpence involved or the bumping journey down and up through Holborn, in order to appeal to Mr. Beckett, and urge him to give her brother one more chance.

"He's had his lesson, sir, and he's not likely to forget it, and I'm certain he'll remember your clemency, sir, to the last day of his life." (A wise young woman, Miss Pycraft, in thus attempting no defence, but throwing her case upon the mercy of the Court; I think she would have done well, but for prejudices of the age, at the Bar.)

"My dear young lady!" Mr. Beckett made a pyramid with his hands and spoke across it, in a fatherly manner. "Women-folk know nothing of City life, and it is my fervent wish they should never do so. I have often said that the moment your sex comes into anything like a business career, I go out of it. I can't imagine that it will ever happen. What you don't understand is that here discipline has to be maintained."

The bonnet was so emphatic in agreeing with this view that with the aid of a glance at the mirror it had to be re-adjusted.

"Discipline must be maintained, and it is impossible for those of us in authority to go back upon what we have said." The handkerchief was again found. "Wait a bit, wait a bit. I am not prepared to say that all the instances of what I may term rebellion to law and order are of the same quality. Insubordination has many varieties, and the case of your brother is, perhaps, not so serious as it might have been. At any rate, I am inclined to recollect that, in the words of our immortal Bard, the quality of justice is not strained."

Miss Pycraft showed fitness for public life by arresting herself from making a correction.

"Not strained," repeated Mr. Beckett. "It falleth as the so on and so forth. And I have to announce to you, that if your brother makes a suitable and adequate apology to me for his behavior, he can resume his duties here to-morrow morning."

Miss Pycraft, promising to request Heaven to bless Mr. Beckett, left. The City man leaned back in his padded chair, glowing with self-content and reviewing the incident complacently. "Rather a nice-looking girl, too," he remarked.

He had to be aroused from his doze, because two men in the trade had called: he explained to his senior clerk that the mere closing of eyes was a great restorative when one suffered from overwork. The fresh interview over, he signed letters that were brought to him, using a quill pen which had been cut to the point that suited him. At ten minutes to five o'clock he washed hands, and in going to catch his omnibus in Gracechurch Street, issued a general warning that no member of the staff was to leave until work was completely finished.

His daughters kissed him when he arrived at the house: they knew marks of affection were welcome to him when he had done with the day's traffic. The elder girl expressed the hope that papa was not tired; hinted a fear that he might be disinclined for the stress and turmoil of a party.

"Life in the old dog yet," he declared, genially. "But bless my soul, my dear, how smart you look in your muslin dress, and your new crinoline. This means"—he gave a waggish look—"this undoubtedly means that some one special is expected."

"Oh, papa."

"It's all right," he said, comfortably; "I can't expect to keep you in

the old nest for ever. Make the most of your opportunities. Marry young and marry often."

The news went about the house that Mr. Beckett was in admirable fettle: his last quip found itself downstairs and was well received by the cook and the housemaid. "The things the master says!" ejaculated cook, amusedly.

Mr. Albert Ruggles came in good time for dinner, and was conducted to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Beckett received him graciously, and the elder girl—who had shown a considerable amount of restlessness as half-past six approached—became flushed at a moment when she particularly desired to look pale and interesting. The drawing-room was well crowded with furniture, and the mantel-piece had no empty spaces; walls were covered with oil paintings and the general impression in the household was that many of these might, if only kept long enough, prove to be of value. Mr. Ruggles, a spruce, well set-up youth, conducted himself admirably in a trying situation, and talked on the few subjects considered to be within the female range: he was acquainted with all that went on in London, and spoke of Mr. Paul Bedford, pictures at the Academy by Mr. Egg, Mr. Tupper's new book of sonnets. The younger girl and the boy entered in: Ruggles discussed with the latter the question of round-arm bowling coupled with the name of Willsher of Kent. The coming in of Mr. Beckett checked conversation; the elder girl noticed, with relief, that papa was still in excellent temper, and that he shook hands heartily with Mr. Ruggles; assured the young man no extra charge was made for seats, and forced him into the largest armchair. Young Ruggles inquired whether Mr. Beckett had endured a tiring day, and the host re-

plied that he had been at it for seven mortal hours, with scarcely a second to himself. Ruggles declared that City life was uncommonly wearing and tearing to the constitution, more perhaps in corn than in sugar: the other said it was not so much a matter of constitution as a question of mental strain; his medical man had often said to him: "Eat what you like, Mr. Beckett, and drink what you like, but take care not to overtax the mind." Ruggles, with a fervent air, hoped Mr. Beckett was following out this wise counsel, urging him to recollect that good men were scarce; the host said he did his best, and no one could do more. Dinner was announced, and Ruggles offered his arm to Mrs. Beckett.

It was a meal that appeared to assume food had not been previously offered during the day, and Mr. Beckett, in carving the large joint of roast beef, ignored the protest of his daughters—"Oh, papa, you have given me a lot!" Gravy, red and warm, was spooned from the dish, and more gravy was poured over each plate; Mr. Beckett told a story communicated to him by a mustard manufacturer. All hands being set to work, Mrs. Beckett prompted her husband, and furnished him with cues—

"What is that story of yours, dear, about a Member of Parliament out hunting?"

And Mr. Beckett, prefacing each anecdote with a hedging phrase of "Expect our friend Ruggles has heard it," gave several from his repertory, and the young man (Heaven forgive him!) declared that each was, to him, new, and fresh, and novel. Ruggles felt it necessary to show a spirit of reciprocity, but the host proved more admirable in recounting than in listening, and a glance from the elder girl stopped the visitor from pursuing his intention. A pudding followed made

of slices of sponge-cakes and layers of jam, set in a pond of thick custard, the whole vehemently flavored with sherry. Cheese, fruit—

"—From my own garden, Ruggles. At the next house, they can't grow anything like these cherries. Help yourselves to claret, and pass the decanter along."

And the children are taken upstairs by Mrs. Beckett. Elder daughter, at the doorway, seems to have some thoughts of swooning, but reconsiders the matter, and door closes without any perturbing incident. Just as well this, for young Ruggles is about to set out on a daring expedition wherein anything may happen: he grips the nut-crackers as the only arm of defence with which he can furnish himself.

"Sir, I—I want to ask you a question."

"Ruggles," says Mr. Beckett, encouragingly, "proceed!"

"Mr. Beckett," rushing into the thick of the forest, "I love your elder daughter, and wish you to allow me to pay my attentions to her."

Mr. Beckett rises, and goes to the hearthrug, the platform from which he is accustomed to make his speeches in the house. Sends hands deep into plaid trousers pockets; shakes his head. "Have you said anything to my child about this?"

"Not a word, sir." Ruggles ought to give signs of confusion, but omits them.

"Now I'm a business man," says Mr. Beckett, deliberately, "and my habits are business-like. What—putting it at the lowest figure—is the income you can reckon upon?"

"At the lowest figure, six hundred a year. At the highest, in view of some success I've had recently——"

"My lad," he interrupts, "it will break my heart to lose her, and her mother will, I fear, never be the same

again. But I see that this is a case of true love, and all I say is—go in and win!"

The evening party began at eight, and lasted until eleven. A dozen young people came, and there was music, with the now engaged Miss Beckett playing a piece on the harp, and very properly breaking down half-way through, necessitating the production of fans and smelling-salts; everyone said "Poor dear, what can you expect!" and Ruggles tried to look as though he were not responsible. Miss Beckett recovered sufficiently to accompany him with two songs by the Honorable Mrs. Norton. The boy, allowed, as a special concession, to stay up, was nearly induced to give an imitation of Mr. Albert Smith, but not quite. One of the visitors performed a clever trick with a fourpenny-bit and a glass of water; no one could understand how it was done excepting

*The Cornhill Magazine.*

Mr. Beckett, who announced that it was merely legerdemain. A father came for two of the girl guests, and Mr. Beckett took him off to the study, to taste some of the best that money could buy, and to smoke one of the finest cigars ingenuity was able to select. Young Ruggles had to go, and the elder Miss Beckett went downstairs to assist him in the arduous task of finding his hat.

At a quarter past eleven o'clock, the City man, in slippers, was alone with his wife, who, to keep him company, took a very small glass of home-made wine.

"Well, my dear," he said jovially, "that gets rid of one of them."

"Yes, James," she said. "And I only hope our girl will be as happy in her married life as her mother has been."

With some discomposure of manner, Mr. Beckett urged his wife not to be a fool.

*W. Pett Ridge.*

## DR. JOHNSON AND THE PROVINCIALS.\*

"It is great impudence," said Dr. Johnson, "to put 'Johnson's Poets' on the back of books which Johnson neither recommended nor revised." What, then, would he have said to "Johnson's Age"? He would not, Sir, for the moment have known what to say. The locution is too modern, and the implication too tremendous for retort. Even on his own conditions it would have been difficult to reply; for, if he did not recommend the age, he could not deny that he had revised it. In an age of "book-building" he was the master architect, and had scored more manuscripts and chastened more styles than any writer of his time. He knew everything about a

book, from proposing it to binding it, and about authors, too. All the penmen of the age were familiar to him, and he to them; from Richardson to Jack Wilkes—the limits of this volume—he had met or discussed them all; and always, in every company of authors, he was the best man in the room. The title of this new volume, then, is more than convenient. It is just. In the contest of representatives (since every age must have its man) Johnson silences all claims. He was the greatest Englishman and author of his day, and so clearly and certainly these things that for the latter part of his life it was enough for him to live and be what he was. We sometimes talk as if Boswell had discovered Johnson; but there was nothing of the comet in Johnson's long and

\* "The Cambridge History of English Literature." Edited by Sir A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller. Vol. X. "The Age of Johnson" (Cambridge University Press. 9s. net.)

laborious career. If any man discovered Johnson it was himself, and the country took his word. It was a reputation beyond control, in which Boswell was an industrious accident; it was all settled before they met. When Boswell came to London, he came, not to support a Pretender, but to be near the throne; and his Life is a Scotsman's guide to the regalia.

## I.

It is common to compare the positions of Johnson and Dryden, and the comparison is honorable to both. Dryden was the greater writer and Johnson the greater man, but they were both prime Englishmen, and by common consent the literary leaders of their time. There is one great difference, however, in their positions, and a man must have little penetration who can read this volume without discovering it. The public which Dryden addressed was an English and even a London public. Johnson addressed the British Isles. His throne was London, but the provinces were his footstool, and from time to time he would make a progress through them to Oxford, or Edinburgh, or the Hebrides. The community of authors, also, in which Dryden lived was an English community. By Johnson's time it was nearer being Scotch, and there was perhaps not a county in Great Britain or Ireland which had not sent its man to the English mart of letters, to win a pension or immortality. Suddenly, within one generation, the sister countries, now become provinces, let loose their young men on the Metropolis of England and threw themselves, for the first time, into the current of English literature and life. It is the cardinal event of the eighteenth century. Authors and audience are henceforth British; it is Britannia, not England, who rules the waves in Thomson's

poem, and Britannia it continued to be: a *truly British age*," said the satirist Churchill bitterly. It is a change as momentous to the literature of this country as the provincial invasion of the literature of Rome, when Spain and Africa and Gaul sent their young men to compete with the Italians in their own idiom at their own doors, in the capital of their common culture. We make this a new date in the literature of Rome. When shall we be wise and make it a new date also in the literature of England? It is to us the chief merit of this new volume that all the materials for this decision are contained in it. In every department of literature and learning English, Scots, and Irish may there be seen, for the first time in our history, working side by side, for the glory of their persons and their parishes, no doubt, but also for a certain general glory which we shall take leave to call the glory of Britain.

The first sign of this change is in the age of Anne, when Scotland sent Arbuthnott and Ireland sent Swift to the English Parliament of wits. It was a powerful deputation; and Addison, as the representative Englishman of the group, had much ado to maintain his country in it. Their manner of coming was conventional; they had other reasons for being in England; but they exhibit already the most striking characteristic of the Scotch and Irish exiles—they had no desire to go home. It was in the third and fourth decades of the century that the second contingent began to arrive. From all parts of the island they came marching, each with his clean shirt, his poem, and his hopes. When Home came up to offer his *Douglas* he was escorted on his way by six ordained ministers of the Manse; but this was pomp and a supererogation. Thomson was more natural. He came alone, like the others, with his "Win-



ter" in his pocket and a great curiosity in his eyes for the country which was to treat him so kindly. He was one of the first of Churchill's "simple bards."

Thence simple bards, by simple prudence taught,  
To this wise town by simple patrons brought,  
In simple manner utter simple lays,  
And take, with simple pensions, simple praise.

It is all true, and Thomson, had he been alive to read it, would have been happy to praise the lines. He was received when he reached London by a Scotch patron, a Scotch printer, and a Scotch friend, and was a good Scot to the last, never shirked his vowels, and employed a Scotch barber whom he called "Wull." He was one of a group of poets who studied landscape and gave a new turn to English poetry: the courtly Mallet, who was kind to Thomson, though no one liked him, the only Scotsman of whom no Scotsman spoke well; Armstrong, the doctor, from Thomson's own county, author of another "Winter"; and the Welshman Dyer. They are unkindly separated from each other in this history, but when they lived they were a group. They are the ancestors of that Anglo-Scottish line of poets much admired in their day, Blair, Akenside, Beattie, Falconer and the rest, poets of one poem, all standing now neglected with their diploma pieces in their hands—a singular spectacle. They were the last, or almost the last, of the Anglicizing poets of this century to make a name. The country had other tasks in hand, and with the help of her Scots and Irish was on the way to succeed. The great men for almost a generation put poetry aside.

## II.

It would be interesting to distribute the achievements of this period among

the three chief nations; for, though they worked together, they had their departments and their peculiar gifts. In the novel, the greatest thing of all, there was never any question of the supremacy. Defoe and Richardson, Fielding and Sterne, hold the ground for England. The Scots have their Smollett, whom they have never owned, and the Irish their Goldsmith; but in the true middle-class tradition of the English novel they never had a share. They had no middle class at home, and it takes more than a generation to understand the middle class of England. The countries outside England which have understood it best are France and Germany, to whom Richardson was what he never was even at home, except to some women—the high dawn of reformation and romance. It is only a symptom of this, but a flattering one, that the able chapter in which he is described in this volume should be the work of a Frenchman. In drama, in which this age was never strong, the balance is changed; for, let England be as proud as possible of her Garrick, the truth must be told that all the best comedies were written by Irishmen, and that the only good tragedy was written by a Scot. In the most powerful period of their existence, with the theatre for the first time in their control, the middle classes of England could never do more than dramatize the Commandments. "Thou shalt not steal," said Lillo the jeweller, and everybody said it was the finest play, and sent the apprentices. For what is cheering or ennobling in the drama they turned, if they turned at all, to the exiles and the wags. It was a characteristic division of labor that the Irish should take the comedies, and that the honor of having written the best tragedy of the day should fall to John Home the Scot. The Irish have always had the feel of the

boards, and the talent for life. A turn for histrionics distinguishes the nation. The colloquial ease which the Scotch, after two centuries of labor at the English tongue, have not yet acquired, came and still comes without difficulty to the Irishman who writes. The almost ludicrous anxiety of the Scots of this period about their idioms and their vowels seems to have had no counterpart among the Irish. Goldsmith's brogue was as pure as his English, and he cultivated both with impunity.

It was in this period, and under the influence of these anxieties, that the Scottish people definitely determined that literary policy which more than anything else confirmed the Britannie character of the eighteenth century. Cut off as they were from the colloquial arts of England, but conscious of great ambitions, they remembered that after all they were educated men, and that in the world of learning it is enough for a writer to have thought and to be clear. They had always been a thinking people; and they now sat down to make themselves clear on every subject which can engage a thinking man. The overwhelming success of the experiment must have astonished them then as much as it astonishes us now. In every department of historical and philosophical learning they took the lead; and almost before England had recovered from her surprise Hume, Robertson, and Adam Smith had entered the world of Europe as standard British authors. Even when they were attacked, or rivalled, it was usually Scotsmen who were found to do it. The only serious rival of Hume's *History* was Smollett's; the only serious critic of his philosophy was Reid. "I believe," said Hume, in 1770, "this is the true historical age, and this the historical nation; I know no less than eight histories on the stocks in this country."

The intellectual confidence of the nation after these displays seemed portentous to the quieter English as they watched its representatives go about their work. London was filled with possible Robertsons, or future Smolletts, until even Dr. Johnson took notice of the pest. He liked the Scotch, and had employed them, and had friends among them all his life. He had a value for them. But he never forgot that in any company of Scotsmen when literature is discussed the tradition is with the first Englishman who enters the room. In the new age of Britannia he stood for England and St. George, and when he stood like that the provincials seemed no higher than his knees. The silence of the Scotch professors when he met them in their own country was more than the silence of discretion. It was the tribute of the provincial to the greatest representative of the English race.

### III.

We wish that in a notice of a volume so excellently planned and so full of good scholarship it had been possible to discriminate among the contributions. We have thought it more profitable to follow the suggestion of the whole. It contains hardly a single chapter in which something is not added to the subject, and two chapters of such notable excellence that even in this volume we read them with surprise; Mr. Nichol Smith's on Johnson and Boswell, a masterpiece of Johnsonian gravity and truth, and Professor Ker's on the Revival of Mediæval Studies. It is not only that they say what is true on their subjects, but that they so often say it for the first time. Mr. Nichol Smith's chapter and the bibliography which goes with it contain more important discoveries about Johnson and Boswell than anything in recent times. One-fifth of the new volume is occupied

with bibliographies, and we have studied them with that attention which bibliographies demand, and which good bibliographies deserve. They are what a scholar reads first, and turns to last; the part that will be useful always; for a good bibliography has the advantage over most chapters, that it is not subject to fashions. Corrected it may be; extended it must be; but so far as it goes it is good for eternity. We regret, therefore, that this should have been a little forgotten in a volume otherwise so conscious of responsibility; that a volume which contains two such bibliographies as Mr. Nettleton's of the Stage and Mr. Nichol Smith's of Johnson should also contain the four bibliographies signed A. T. B.

It is not that the bibliographies are bad, though they contain errors and omissions which the authors of the chapters would not have made; they are neither bad nor good. Nor do we blame A. T. B. We believe him to be a skilful and industrious bibliographer;

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but we believe also that no man can be a good bibliographer *in vacuo*. His only crime is to have done something tolerably which he should never have been asked to do at all. If anyone is to be blamed it is the four contributors who left their work half done and, having written their chapters, were apparently content to leave the rest to another hand, as if a bibliography were a kind of index to be acknowledged in the preface, and a bibliographer some absolute thing, equally a bibliographer at all times and on all themes. This is a view of bibliography which we cannot accept. The true bibliography is something much more generous. It is not merely a sign of the historian's good faith (though it is that); it is a gift to the world of the ground he stands on. The first requisite of a bibliography on any subject is that its author shall be master of his subject. We should be sorry to see the Cambridge History of English Literature desert this ground.

## GOLF FIFTY YEARS AGO.

There are not many golfers playing now who knew either how to swing a club or much about the game in the 'sixties. More is the pity. It is possible, if not probable, that some present members of the numerous clubs would doubt that the game was played in England so long ago—my statement of the fact has been challenged more than once—and be very surprised to learn that the Blackheath Golf Club dates back three hundred years, having been established in the reign of James I. Unfortunately the early records of the club were destroyed in a fire. Other golf clubs in England fifty years ago might be counted on one's fingers and were lim-

ited to Westward Ho, Hoylake, Brighton, and a links in the Isle of Wight. Very early in the 'seventies the London Scottish formed a club on Wimbledon Common, the clubhouse being near the windmill in the centre of the common. It was not long however before there was a divided opinion among the members and a rupture took place. The majority who seceded started the Wimbledon Golf Club, with their clubhouse nearer to the town of Wimbledon than the present one. Another small club was started at Tooting Bec about the same time. It was not until after 1880 that the golf fever took hold of the English young man, and links and clubhouses

sprang up on likely as well as unsuitable grounds. One of the earliest of these after 1880 was at Felixstowe, when eight of us were invited to open the links. The professional at that time was not as prominent as now.

Probably many members who are acquainted with the antiquity of the Blackheath Golf Club gained their information as guests of the members at their annual dinner and assisted in all the old and quaint customs attending it. Space will not permit me to describe these. It is hoped that they will not only be religiously preserved by this club, but imitated by the younger ones. Few there are who can remember these cheery annual gatherings when they were held alternately at "The Ship" and "The Trafalgar" at Greenwich, or previously at "The Crown and Sceptre," and even earlier at "The Green Man," within a stone's throw of their clubhouse. When the dinner took place at the latter hotel it was more than fifty years ago, in the good old coaching days; and how many interesting recollections of coaching, the gentlemen of the road, and golf are conjured up by the name "The Green Man"! It must not be supposed that golf had any attraction for the gentlemen of the road, whose happy hunting-ground was not on the Blackheath golf links, but not far away, on the top of Shooters Hill, where the horses were blown from ascending the hill whether going to Dover or returning to London. "The Green Man" dinner was of the good old English fare and did not include, it is scarcely necessary to say, the present standing dish from Scotland—haggis; but the quaint loving reversible silver cup, similar in shape to a reversible egg-cup, went round the table, each person being expected to quaff the measure of neat whisky, with a strong peaty flavor, and the flavor was not as strong as the

whisky. As "The Green Man" at Blackheath was so mixed up and associated with golf during its existence, a short description of the hotel is not out of place. The site was acquired for building modern houses less than fifty years ago. It stood quite near to the clubhouse upon the opposite side of the road on the edge of the heath. It originally covered an acre of ground, the stables and stableyard occupying most of it. Bit by bit it has been swallowed up, more profitable houses taking its place. The hotel itself was not large, as it was not required to supply accommodation for visitors. The stables on the other hand were always busy in those coaching days, and extended from the brow of the hill to the corner of the heath, where the first tee was, known more recently as Purvis's Corner. Here the Dover coach made its first change out of London. As it was always well loaded with the Continental traffic, two extra leaders went to its assistance at the foot of the hill. The coach arriving at the top after passing the clubhouse turned to the right, then to the left, and again to the left through a gateway into the stableyard. A short time was allowed for breakfast—in fact scarcely time to swallow a meal before time was called. When it started it passed out of the yard under an archway in the hotel and out on to the Dover Road, to bowl along merrily with the fresh team through the golf links to Shooters Hill.

It was over the archway in a long room capable of seating two hundred people that the Blackheath Golf Club annual dinner took place. And what a cheery gathering faced the captain of the year, who occupied the chair, the vice-chair being filled by his successor! The dinner hour was four o'clock. How much cordiality, good feeling, and good breeding controlled

the diners! What a school for a young man to be permitted to enter! With all due respect to the present-day golfer, he cannot compare to the school just referred to for politeness and strict etiquette in playing the game. If a match or a foursome was made up previously—and frequently they were made up at the annual dinner—it was for either a dinner for four, or two playing clubs, or a dozen balls; but it was never thought of on walking to the first tee to ask your opponent what he would have on the match. Betting is one of the abuses that has crept into the game, and for the benefit of the game it should be stamped out.

The change in the playing clubs is as marked as the alteration in every  
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detail of the game. The clubs had long heads, and the only clubs were the driver, three spoons, the wooden putter—never a metal one—three irons, and a cleek. The spoons were long, mild, and short, and the irons heavy, light, and lofting. All other clubs are of more recent date. The clubs had very whippy shafts, particularly the driver and long spoon. In playing some few years back with a driver my young opponent lost no opportunity to criticize adversely my whippy club. At the end of play I took it to the professional to have a slight repair. He at once remarked, "Ay, that's a gran' shaft," and when he was told it was made by Willie Dunn at Blackheath in 1862, he replied "Ah! no wonder."

## IN THE SWIM.

"Do you tango?" asked Miss Hopkins, as soon as we were comfortably seated. I know her name was Hopkins, because I had her down on my programme as Popkins, which seemed too good to be true; and, in order to give her a chance of reconsidering it, I had asked her if she was one of the Popkinses of Hampshire. It had then turned out that she was really one of the Hopkinses of Maida Vale.

"No," I said, "I don't." She was only the fifth person who had asked me, but then she was only my fifth partner.

"Oh, you ought to. You must be up-to-date, you know."

"I'm always a bit late with these things," I explained. "The waltz came to England in 1812, but I didn't really master it till 1904."

"I'm afraid if you wait as long as that before you master the tango it will be out."

"That's what I thought. By the

time I learnt the tango, the bingo would be in. My idea was to learn the bingo in advance, so as to be ready for it. Think how you'll all envy me in 1917. Think how Society will flock to my Bingo Quick Lunches. I shall be the only man in London who binges properly. Of course by 1918 you'll all be at it."

"Then we must have one together in 1918," smiled Miss Hopkins.

"In 1918," I pointed out coldly, "I shall be learning the pongo."

My next partner had no name that I could discover, but a fund of conversation.

"Do you tango?" she asked me as soon as we were comfortably seated.

"No," I said, "I don't. But," I added, "I once learned the minuet."

"Oh, they're not very much alike, are they?"

"Not a bit. However, luckily that doesn't matter, because I've forgotten all the steps now."



She seemed a little puzzled and decided to change the subject.

"Are you going to learn the tango?" she asked.

"I don't think so. It took me four months to learn the minuet."

"But they're quite different, aren't they?"

"Quite," I agreed.

As she seemed to have exhausted herself for the moment, it was obviously my business to say something. There was only one thing to say.

"Do you tango?"

"No," she said, "I don't."

"Are you going to learn?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Ah!" I said; and five minutes later we parted for ever.

The next dance really was a tango, and I saw to my horror that I had a name down for it. With some difficulty I found the owner of it, and prepared to explain to her that unfortunately I couldn't dance the tango, but that for profound conversation about it I was undoubtedly the man. Luckily she explained first.

"I'm afraid I can't do this," she apologized. "I'm so sorry."

"Not at all," I said magnanimously. "We'll sit it out."

We found a comfortable seat.

"Do you tango?" she asked.

I was tired of saying "No."

"Yes," I said.

"Are you sure you wouldn't like to find somebody else to do it with?"

"Quite, thanks. The fact is I do it rather differently from the way they're doing it here to-night. You see, I actually learnt it in the Argentine."

She was very much interested to hear this.

"Really? Are you out there much? I've got an uncle living there now. I wonder if——"

"When I say I learnt it in the Argentine," I explained, "I mean that I was actually taught it in St.

John's Wood, but that my dancing mistress came from——"

"In St. John's Wood?" she said eagerly. "But how funny! My sister is learning there. I wonder if——"

She was a very difficult person to talk to. Her relations seemed to spread themselves all over the place.

"Perhaps that is hardly doing justice to the situation," I explained again. "It would be more accurate to put it like this. When I decided—by the way, does your family frequent Paris? No? Good. Well, when I decided to learn the tango, the fact that my friends the Hopkinses of St. John's Wood, or rather Maida Vale, had already learnt it in Paris naturally led me to—I say, what about an ice? It's getting awfully hot in here."

"Oh, I don't think——"

"I'll go and get them," I said hastily; and I went and took a long time getting them, and, as it turned out that she didn't want hers after all, a longer time eating them. When I was ready for conversation again the next dance was beginning. With a bow I relinquished her to another.

"Come along," said a bright voice behind me; "this is ours."

"Hallo, Norah, is that you? Come on."

We hurried in, danced in silence, and then found ourselves a comfortable seat. For a moment neither of us spoke . . .

"Have you learnt the tango yet?" asked Norah.

"Fourteen," I said aloud.

"Help! Does that mean that I'm the fourteenth person who has asked you?"

"The night is yet young, Norah. You are only the eighth. But I was betting that you'd ask me before I counted twenty. You lost, and you owe me a pair of ivory-backed hair-brushes and a cigar-cutter."

"Bother. Anyhow, I'm not going

to be stopped talking about the tango if I want to. Did you know I was learning? I can do the scissors."

"Good. We'll do the new Fleet Street movement together, the scissors-and-paste. You go into the ball-room and do the scissors, and I'll—er—stick here and do the paste."

"Can't you really do any of it at all, and aren't you going to learn?"

"I can't do any of it at all, Norah. I am not going to learn, Norah."

"It isn't so very difficult, you know. I'd teach you myself for tuppence."

"Will you stop talking about it for threepence?" I asked, and I took out three coppers.

"No."

I sighed and put them back again.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was the last dance of the evening. My hostess, finding me lonely, had dragged me up to somebody, and I and whatever her name was were in the supper room drinking our farewell soup. So far we had said nothing

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to each other. I waited anxiously for her to begin. Suddenly she began.

"Have you thought about Christmas presents yet?" she asked.

I nearly swooned. With difficulty I remained in an upright position. She was the first person who had not begun by asking me if I danced the tango!

"Excuse me," I said. "I'm afraid I didn't—would you tell me your name again?"

I felt that it ought to be celebrated in some way. I had some notion of writing a sonnet to her.

"Hopkins," she said; "I knew you'd forgotten me."

"Of course I haven't," I said, suddenly remembering her. The sonnet would never be written now. "We had a dance together before."

"Yes," she said. "Let me see," she added, "I did ask you if you danced the tango, didn't I?"

A. A. M.

## BRITISH LAWLESSNESS.

It used to be our pride that we were a law-abiding people. In particular, we were wont to compare ourselves with America, which we held to be a land where every man chose for himself what laws he would obey, where lynching and other modes of homicide were unrebuked, and where the police "stood in" with law-breakers. The tables are now turned on us. In an interesting article in the "Atlantic Monthly," Mr. Fielding Hall quotes the following extract from a letter recently received from an American friend, and the opinion it expresses is held by many recent visitors from America. "It is a curious phenomenon, and a phenomenon I believe to be based on fact, that Americans are a

more law-abiding people than the English. This never seemed to me possible till Mafeking night. Since that memorable ebullition there have been numerous indications of an excitability of English character which seems to me to transcend the unsteadiness of my own people."

This "increasing impatience of English people under law," as Mr. Fielding Hall terms it, is indeed a special manifestation of the new century. It appears in all classes of society, and is evolved by widely different occasions. Now it is the violent unconstitutionality of the House of Lords in rejecting a Budget, now a league to defy the Insurance Act or to refuse taxes,

now an open undefended violation of speed-limits by motor drivers, now a riotous holding up of traffic by strikers, an organized attack on property by arsonettes, a policy of brutal assaults on workers in the Belfast ship-yards carried out with impunity, and finally, open preparations in Ireland for "civil war," assisted by officers of the King's army, with the pledged support of the leaders of His Majesty's Opposition in this country. A generation ago such a state of things would have seemed incredible. What is the explanation? Is there, indeed, a periodicity of the revolutionary spirit in the life of nations, as some plausibly maintain, which exhibits itself in history at intervals of about half-a-century? Or may we regard all this excitability of feeling and looseness of behavior as the sequelæ of a violent debauch of Jingoism?

Mr. Fielding Hall himself adopts what one may venture to designate the "bellicose" explanation. It is the kick of the natural man against the growing tyranny of law. The nation, he thinks, is realizing that it is offensively law-ridden. Education Acts, liquor legislation, "Social Evil" legislation, Workmen's Compensation, and Insurance Acts, and a hundred others are invading the private liberties of every class.

Add to this the growing despotism of the professions and of the trade-unions exercised over their members and the public, and assisted or condoned by governments. "Thus, the average Englishman now, rich or poor, is bound hand and foot in a maze of laws and prohibitions. He is preyed upon by Government officials innumerable, and by powerful secret organizations. His house used to be his castle once, his private house was his own, but he is now the inmate of a vast reformatory, and his house is but a cell in it." All this, of

course, is wildly exaggerated. The real liberty of the citizen is seldom seriously diminished by such laws and regulations; on the whole, it is enhanced. Most of the legislation which to Mr. Fielding Hall appears tyrannical is cheerfully accepted by the great majority of citizens. What is exhibited in the lawlessness that occurs is an increasing disposition of dissatisfied minorities to challenge and to violate laws. Formerly minorities "knew their place" and acquiesced; now like Whitman's good democrats, "they rise up freely against the never-ending audacity of elected persons." "But," objects the constitutionalist, "in a self-governing country like yours, the will of the people ought to prevail; you made these laws, and you must obey them." No doubt it is hard on the minority, but minorities must suffer! And, in truth, minorities have usually suffered quietly in the past. Why do they refuse to suffer now? According to Mr. Fielding Hall, because they are conscious that they are not minorities submitting to majorities at all, but because they have discovered that Government is a "secret tyranny, no matter what party is in, and that it masquerades as popular government." So we are led to the conclusion that the prevailing lawlessness is due to the fact that the people do not really make their laws—in a word, to the view that our boasted democracy is nothing else than an "organized hypocrisy."

Now we know exactly the sort of case that can be made for this position by dint of selected instances and generalization from scandalous exceptions. To persons influenced by some particular resentment and ignorant of history, it sounds very plausible. There is, of course, a sense in which "the people" never makes, perhaps never can make, its own laws. But in this country, at any rate, it has much

more to do with the making of its laws to-day than ever in the past. Whatever deflecting influence one attributes to the Cabinet or the party system, it is absurd to contend that the wider franchise and popular education have really diminished some power of popular self-government possessed in earlier times, and that this new lawlessness is a protest against the curtailment of free legislation. We do not believe that the trouble is due either to the intrinsic badness of the laws or to the fact that we are governed, as Mr. Fielding Hall pretends, by a Star Chamber. It seems to us mainly attributable to a co-operation of two or three causes. In the first place, recent legislation in this country has concerned itself with bigger issues vitally affecting the interests of property and of social status, thus exciting powerful class interests and antagonisms. These conflicts were bound to come, but the Boer War precipitated their action, directly inciting the struggle for Protection, the Lloyd George Budget, the House of Lords crisis, the Parliament Act, and the conjunction of great constitutional and social measures within the compass of a half-decade. Coincident, but not wholly unconnected with this crowding of big concrete controversies in male politics, was the rapid inflammation of the still more impassioned issue of woman suffrage with its continuous series of exciting incidents.

This sudden lifting of politics into a higher level of interest and importance, with bigger stakes at issue, makes minorities more desperate in their resistance, and more disposed, if they can, to defy the laws. The fact that for the first time the overwhelming majority of the rich and influential citizens are in the opposition, fighting a series of losing political battles against governments which are,

on their interpretation, engaged in passing predatory and revolutionary measures by unconstitutional methods, has been a liberal education in lawlessness. For when peers and privy councillors foster rebellion, when motorists and lady suffragists openly defy the laws that happen to annoy them, why should ordinary working people not follow the fashion of "their betters," choosing their own laws to break? The authority of law was formerly "sacred" to the vast majority of our people, offences against it were really disreputable. But now that we see our superiors "taking the law into their own hands," we shall do the same. As they dispute the right of King and Parliament to make laws, we, the workers, will call in question all the rights of property and the economics as well as the political authority of our "masters." So there is coming about a general loosening of respect for authority of every sort. Church, State, business, and social conventions. This is by no means entirely to be feared and regretted. For in part, it is associated with a genuine and growing liberty of thought, the fruits of popular education, and of a wider and more rational outlook upon life. It will force us to a reconsideration and a reconstruction of our political institutions, so as to give a freer, fuller, and more representative play to the judgments, feelings, and interests of all sorts and conditions of people. For though there is little substance in Mr. Fielding Hall's tales of an increase of governmental tyranny, the growing desire of the people for a firmer hand upon the lever of legislation is a thoroughly sane feeling. The present epoch of recurrent lawlessness is, from this point of view, the register of the maladjustment between the new and more conscious democracy of feeling and the antiquated machinery of party and

Government. Its remedy is to mould organs of representation, of legislation, and of administration, more quickly,

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more accurately, and more effectively responsive to this play of popular thought and feeling.

## CHILDHOOD.

The little book before us is rather fragmentary—necessarily so, perhaps, since it has only 64 pages—and its contents seem somewhat casually arranged and selected. But it is of great interest because it is full of ideas, and the delicately painted scenes of reminiscence, which at first we admire for the art of their evocation, have their significance. The book is no practical manual, but is eminently suggestive. For ourselves, we both enjoy art and seek for instruction. Good writing is too rare to pass unnoticed, but the present world is so anarchic and casual that practical views may well take precedence. What is the matter with the child of to-day? Has it enslaved too many of its elders, and is it happier than it was? These are questions that press on us shrewdly.

The one point that needs emphasis for the practical parent of to-day is the necessity of discipline. Everywhere nowadays we see children kept up to absurd hours; allowed far too many luxuries, including an amount of money their fathers never dreamt of possessing; and generally pushed forward for open commendation by indiscreet admirers. Vanity is taught by the stage, and by the subsequent reproduction of the successful darling's portrait in a picture-paper, often with a fulsome addition of journalese about cleverness and charm; and the craze for notoriety seems to have invaded sensible trainers of the young, who should know better. "Ah, il n'y a plus d'enfants," we exclaim when we find

\* "Childhood." By Alice Meynell. "Fellowship Books." (Batsford.)

a young denizen of the nursery refusing an invitation to tea unless there are crumpets, or interrupting his parents with silly contradictions. The child, in some up-to-date, ill-directed homes, tolerates his elders. There is a gain, perhaps, in allowing more freedom of action and responsibility than an earlier régime permitted; but these victims of inordinate desires, late hours, and other perpetual excitements are surely on the way to mature into nervous wrecks or creatures whose charm, sensibly regarded, is astonishingly near insolence.

The performing child produces nowadays more and more wonders of cleverness at an astonishing age, but it is often at the expense of later years. The fun which would have sufficed for an earlier generation is far too dull, and the utmost you can expect from a child of to-day as thanks is the comment "Not bad." They are all "nil-admirari-ists," to use the word Ouida applies to her curled darlings of the army and professional male beauties. They are become self-conscious, and often have lost that natural grace which should attend a child's movements.

In her closing pages Mrs. Meynell touches on these cases of indulgence, but not so decisively as we could wish. She has discovered a cheerful adult who was bored as a child, and speaks of the necessity of recognizing such cases:—

"What is to be avoided is *ennui* and the vacant hours. Our fathers guarded against this austere, by means of duty and occupation, whether a child's duty or a schoolboy's; we—lessons



apart—are attempting that guard by means of amusement—whether a child's 'fun' or a schoolboy's."

We are unwilling, as Mrs. Meynell says, to question this need for amusement, but

"the evil to be feared is not that of making the child too happy; it is that of using up the capital estate of pleasure. If a child is to continue happy, to continue amused and gay, he must be entertained upon the usufruct and not upon the capital of pleasures. Nay, even elders, considerate enough to hold that children should not have 'fun' too unmixed, lest it should lose its charm, hardly know that it is the very fact of 'fun' that is in danger. The child over-amused is in peril of losing amusement itself within his own heart, and not merely the pleasure in pantomime, or the pleasure in roller-skating, in other words the need of a change in gaieties. Alas, it is gaiety itself that is at stake."

We have quoted this passage at length because it is the author's chief contribution to the expression of those ideals which are the aim of the "Fellowship Books." Elsewhere we find suggestions, points which may be taken up out of scenes in France or Italy. Children want much more to eat than their elders; the Age of Innocence is succeeded, it has been said, by the Age of Greediness, a natural desire for copious building matter in the growing houses of life, and we are introduced to Ruskin peeling walnuts which he might never eat, and Mr. Hare, who made a bitter record of the tyrannies of his uncles and aunts. But these are figures of the past; we are not afraid of too much discipline to-day, of tantalizing greediness in elders. Rather is it a time of laxity for young and old alike. Mrs. Meynell does well in reminding her readers that children have to be taught self-denial. It is

"a truth that the self-indulgent youth, middle-age, and old age now alive,

and having children in charge, would blush to publish. Example is a good way to teach them."

Undoubtedly in these days childish likes and dislikes are being studied with a care which would have astonished earlier parents. Now Mrs. Meynell tells us that, unlike adult members of the modern Irish school, children do not believe in fairies, and they certainly ought not to believe in pantomimes, for "burlesque and irony do not accord with the simplicity which becomes them." Yet music-hall favorites and music-hall jokes bulk large in this modern drama for the young, which is loud and long enough to give a well-seasoned adult a headache.

The habit of derision, pardonable in the Cockney street urchin or the gamin of Paris, who is always playing an uphill game against life, is not pleasant in more fortunate children, but it is frequently fostered. We have referred more than once recently to the inroads of the cult of ugliness into children's books. Grotesque toys, says our author, impose our own sense of humor on children, and often they frighten instead of amusing. A child's imagination is a wonderful thing, inconceivable to most of us, only to be recaptured by a Wordsworth or a Dickens. We have known a shy and sensitive boy clouded with real and abiding sorrow over physical deformity as revealed in a story-book.

All that Mrs. Meynell says of the literary side of childhood and those who cater for it is excellent, but we are somewhat surprised to find this verdict:—

"In all the children's books of a season you shall hardly find one 'moral' at the close."

Surely the "morals" are there in many cases, but the word has gone out of use, like "virtue" and "enlarging the understanding," and other relics of the eighteenth century and

early nineteenth. Now a host of books are devoted to mere clowning—we have so many humorous artists—and the fraud of adult jests is forced on the nursery:—

“Too much common sense—and too common—was the fault of a hundred years ago. And now the fault is too much common nonsense—and far too common.”

With far too many books, and far too many people who have no real gift for writing getting into print, it would be strange if the standard of publication all round were not lowered.

The references—not more than a word or two for the most part—to various men and women of letters are piquant, and please us in the main, though they are occasionally a little wilful. For instance, Esther Summerson in “Bleak House” gave Peepy a little horse after one of his misfortunes—

“Esther, contemned by the readers who think to crush Dickens by one word, ‘Sentimentality’ (albeit this is an emotion that would be good for the majority, and the majority includes these critics), and by another

The Athenæum.

word, ‘Caricature’ (caricature being nevertheless a most admirable art).”

This *obiter dictum* alone would supply occasion for a whole article. We only remark here that the gracious present of a doll to a distressed child is not sufficient to alter materially our conception of another matter, Dickens’s method of presenting the character of the giver, and that “sentimentality,” as it is commonly understood, is not in any danger of being scouted by the majority. The cynics are not able to frighten feeling out of the modern world. They may even think themselves lucky if their protests are heard at all. For, apart from books and plays, an enormous, if not far greater, influence is wielded to-day by the picture palace and the picture paper. They are popular, if anything could be, and they wallow in sentimentalism daily. Their crudity is, we think, even beyond Mrs. Meynell’s advocacy. A source of humor, perhaps, to the better educated, they are to be considered seriously, for they are the form of education which the shallow-minded prefer.

## TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN

### ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC LIFE.

Not yet the end; only the end of strife.

But now—while still the brave unwearied heart,  
Fixed upon England, fain to keep its part  
In her Imperial life,

Beats with the old unconquerable pride—

Now leave to younger limbs the dust and palm,  
And let the weary body seek the calm  
That comes with eventide.

There take your rest within the sunset glow,

All feuds forgotten of your fighting days,  
Circled with love and laurelled with the praise  
Of friend and ancient foe.

Punch.

Owen Seaman.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Boy-readers will find the latest volume in Francis Rolt-Wheeler's U. S. Service Series, "The Boy with the U. S. Indians," one of the most beguiling and best worth while in the list. As in the preparation of the four earlier volumes, the author has had the encouragement and advice of high officials in the department chosen for description, and the use of illustrations drawn from official sources. But this use of official material and the careful verifying of all the incidents described do not in the least diminish the interest of the narrative. The reader gains from the book a vivid impression of Indian life and character, the history and distinguishing traits of different tribes, and the strenuous bravery with which the Indians have made their futile stand against the advance of white civilization. There are thirty or more spirited illustrations. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.

"A People's Man," is not the first story in which Mr. E. Phillips Oppenheim has ventured to predict the future of the present English political turmoil, but he makes things easy for the representatives of all parties. Even the socialist Jack has his Jill at last, and may drink whatever pleases him, and the lovelorn young person comes to happiness, although it is possible that her gratitude to Dame Fortune was by no means intense. But Mr. Oppenheim can afford to play his game of amusing the reader with all his cards faced outwards and only the best in use. As usual, he insists upon his little joke, and does not spare emperor, King or prime minister when there is any question of blunting its point. As for Maraton himself, he, the people's man, becomes everything

which he has professed to despise, and the German invader disappears in a halo of felicity and misplaced labials and dentals. No wrong to the author is involved in telling his secret. The pleasure of watching his skill doubles the interest of the game. Had he chosen to begin at either end of his story instead of starting in the middle and working his plot shuttlewise, the effect would have been equivalent to the actual result. The reader may live in comfort as to European politics for a few weeks. He knows what is coming next and may safely speculate in stocks or in breadstuffs as it pleases him. Little, Brown & Co.

Ruth Kedzie Wood's "The Tourist's Spain and Portugal" (Dodd, Mead & Co.) is a handbook which should form a part of the outfit of every intending visitor to those countries. It is a guide book and something more; it gives with precision and detail, all the information which tourists need as to routes, hotels, fares and all the rest; and it gives also vivid and intimate glimpses of the life of the people, their occupations and sports, the monasteries, art galleries and museums, and with all this, enough of history but not too much to furnish a setting. The author enjoyed unusual opportunities and official courtesies in gathering her material, and the result is a sprightly, well-proportioned and thoroughly up-to-date handbook. A map and twenty-five or thirty illustrations add to its value and attractiveness.

Will N. Harben has shown in his former work a grasp and understanding of human nature above that of the ordinary novelist, and in his latest work, "The Desired Woman" he main-

tains the high standard he has set for himself. Again the story is laid in Georgia; in Atlanta and in the mountains. Moyston, an ambitious young Atlantic banker, has a nervous breakdown and goes to the mountains for rest. There he meets the most wonderful woman he has ever seen, a beautiful and intellectual young school teacher. He tells her of his love and she returns it. He goes back to the city determined to lead a new life and to return and marry the country girl. He breaks an unfortunate alliance with a woman but is immediately afterward urged into what is considered a brilliant alliance for his success socially and financially. The story tells how the mountain woman's love for him was killed, and how she comes to love another man, but how Moyston's life was wrecked by what he had himself induced. It is an absorbing study of the effect of wrong doing upon the one who does it, and it bears the stamp of absolute sincerity. Harper and Bros.

Any one who takes up Arnaldo Cervesato's "The Roman Campagna" (Small, Maynard & Co.) with the expectation of finding it the usual tourists' guide, is destined to disappointment; but to a very agreeable disappointment, for, while it furnishes all the information which the most exacting tourist could ask, and its more than four hundred illustrations make it a volume of far more than ordinary attractiveness and beauty, its scope is much wider and its researches go far deeper than one is accustomed to expect in books of travel. To begin with, the area which it covers is wider than the title promises. By the Roman Campagna the author does not mean merely the plain around the city, but he includes all that was embraced of old within the district known as "Latina Tellus," the Latin Land, extending along the Tyrrhenian

Sea for two hundred miles. Moreover, the author is an Italian, familiar with every mile of this territory, a painstaking student of its history from the earliest times, acquainted with all its ancient roads and ruins, and a sympathetic observer of the conditions and needs of its scattered population, most of whom live in squalor, in hamlets far separated from each other, occupying rude huts upon fever-swept marshes, in a state of abject poverty such as few visitors to the ancient city would imagine to exist only a few miles away. Realization of these conditions imparts an unexpected note of human interest to the volume. As for the illustrations, they are as varied and beautiful as they are numerous; and, in connection with the vivid text, they bring before the mind both the past and the present of this ancient centre of human life and history. Altogether, the book is one to be read with keen interest, for the translators, Louise Calco and Mary Dove, have well preserved the beauty of the author's style; and it is one to which the reader will turn again and again after the first reading for the pleasure to be found in its illustrations.

Memories of "Amyas Leigh" and "Robinson Crusoe" and of sailing uncharted seas with Charles Warren Stoddard; and Herman Melville; of the Alsatia into which Scott took Nigel Bruce, and of the ghastly London plague and fire of which DeFoe wrote with such gusto crowd upon the reader of "Idonia," the novel with which Mr. Arthur F. Wallis makes his appearance before American readers. Being young, he chooses that his hero no mate for the lovely maiden who shall be so old as to feel himself to be crosses his path, although he conjugates the verb "to rescue" with Idonia for its object at least once a day, and once a night when fate is unkind to

her. No matter how great may be the reader's experience of novels, Mr. Wallis does not permit him to enjoy any certainty as to Idonia's ultimate fate, and he reads on breathlessly to the end. Is it happy? That is for the reader to judge. Idonia's husband declares the existence of authentic records. The story offers an agreeable stroll down Fleet Street two centuries before Dr. Johnson commended the exercise, and presents the towers of Julius in an aspect shameful indeed to readers to whom their terrors are only "an auld sang." Idonia and her elderly swain are worthy of one another and if Mr. Wallis has visions of any more lovers of their species, may he soon present them to American readers! Mr. Charles E. Brock's pictures tell the story, but he has chosen their subjects so carefully that they anticipate the catastrophe no more than the text and this is a merit almost as uncommon as that manifested by the author. Little, Brown & Co.

Gabriel-Honore Riqueti de Mirabeau all his life labored under the burden of useless superfluities and a scarcity of the necessities of life, yet the author of "Mirabeau: a Biography," M. Louis Barthou, Prime Minister of France, ends his book by saying that he loved life passionately and worshipped his own fame, but was content to leave his weaknesses to the judgment of the world. He was aware that he had fallen short of the full measure of his powers, and he had failed to satisfy himself. Gallic merits and Gallic failings, eloquence and profligacy, he had inherited from both of his parents, and both he and his wife had used their inheritance and both sentimentalized over their behavior with Gallic complacency tempered in his case by annoyance that his wife should permit anyone to eclipse him in her easy affections. That he should

have "adorable companions" was endurable but that she should be adored was not tolerable. He quarrelled with all the world, whether as musical critic, politician, or man of letters. The straightforward lie was easy to him as to a Spartan or a North American Indian whether the subject was art or politics, or history. He was prepared for his career in the Assembly by a long course of complicated family quarrels in which he was alternately on the extreme Right and the extreme Left. The history of Sparta or of Mexico is a chronicle of ancient peace compared to the life led by him, and his untruthfulness would have shamed Leonidas or Philip of Wampanoag, or an Apache chief. Yet if Louis XVI. had listened to him in time, the day of woe for France might have been postponed; and Maria Theresa's daughter might have escaped the guillotine and Burke's noble lamentation over her fate need never have been needed. But Mirabeau was invincibly unlucky in his final deeds however wise in his initial opinion. As a journalist working on a daily paper and responsible for words only, he would have been enviably at ease but the Assembly offered him a stage well adapted for the display of his matchless histrionic powers. As one statesman judging another from the safe angle of more than a century, and in the contrasting light of a century that has created a new France, M. Barthou judges a period and a man subjected to the fierce light shed by whole libraries of histories, poems, rhapsodies, and diatribes, eulogies and denunciations and he performs his work as only a Frenchman can, as truly as Mirabeau lived a life impossible to any one but a Frenchman. "Mirabeau: a Biography," taking into consideration its subject, its author and its tremendous historical background is the biography of the year. Dodd, Mead & Co.